

Chronicles

October 2006

A MAGAZINE OF AMERICAN CULTURE

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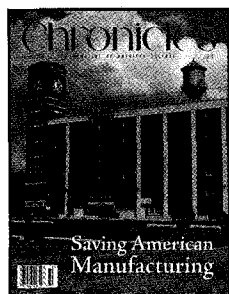
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A publication of The Rockford Institute.
Editorial and Advertising Offices:
928 North Main Street, Rockford, IL 61103.
Website: www.chroniclesmagazine.org
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Advertising Phone: (815) 964-5813.
Subscription Department: P.O. Box 800,
Mount Morris, IL 61054. Call 1-800-877-5459.

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Chronicles: A Magazine of American Culture (ISSN 0887-5731) is published monthly for \$39.99 (foreign subscriptions add \$12 for surface delivery, \$48 for Air Mail) per year by The Rockford Institute, 928 North Main Street, Rockford, IL 61103-7061. Preferred periodical postage paid at Rockford, IL and additional mailing offices. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to *Chronicles*, P.O. Box 800, Mount Morris, IL 61054.

The views expressed in *Chronicles* are the authors' alone and do not necessarily reflect the views of The Rockford Institute or of its directors. Unsolicited manuscripts cannot be returned unless accompanied by a self-addressed stamped envelope.

Chronicles
A MAGAZINE OF AMERICAN CULTURE

Vol. 30, No. 10 October 2006
Printed in the United States of America

POLEMICS & EXCHANGES

On the Other War

While Ted Galen Carpenter makes some valid points about the situation today in Afghanistan ("America's Other War," *News*, August), his attempt to blame everything on an alleged shift of focus from Afghanistan to Iraq is nonsense. This is an old, tired charge made mainly by antiwar Democrats in the last election but abandoned when it did not hold up to scrutiny.

Ret. Marine Lt. Gen. Michael DeLong, who was deputy commander of Central Command while the Iraq invasion was being planned, states unequivocally in his memoirs *Inside CentCom* that "We didn't need to divert a single trooper from Afghanistan to Iraq. The Afghan war and the anti-terror Coalition did not suffer one bit. In fact, few people know that the very day we launched our attack against Iraq, we also launched a massive operation in Afghanistan." He recalls telling President Bush on March 17, 2003, "We're ready to go in Iraq. . . . [W]e are not going to jeopardize the war on terrorism in Afghanistan."

The U.S. military was not overextended by the initial plans for war in Afghanistan and Iraq. Indeed, the original plan for Iraq envisioned sending 300,000 troops, but Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld insisted the plan be revised downward. In the end, only about half that number were sent. Rumsfeld had also limited initial troop commitments to Afghanistan because of his distaste for ground combat. As I wrote for the Army War College journal *Parameters* (Winter 2002), "Airpower in support of Northern Alliance fighters had led to the initial retreat by Taliban and al-Qaeda forces from Kabul back to Kandahar. Air strikes also harassed that retreat; but without better armed and more mobile ground troops to encircle Kabul, the enemy could not be 'bagged' while still concentrated. The deployment of even one airmobile brigade . . . would have made a major difference in the campaign right then." But it was not preparations for Iraq that prevented that deployment.

Rumsfeld's fanciful notion of how wars should be fought, as opposed to how they must be fought when regime change is the objective, has been a common source

of long-term problems in Iraq and Afghanistan. The overextension that the Army and Marines now suffer is from the duration of the wars and the repeated deployments, not from the initial campaigns. There is nothing more expensive than to try to fight a war on the cheap.

Carpenter makes two other errors. First, he confuses defeating the enemy with eradicating the enemy. It is virtually impossible to eradicate a terrorist group, especially one filled with religious fanatics that can retreat into a wild zone such as the Pakistan-Afghan border area. It only takes a handful of survivors to regroup. But the Taliban/Al Qaeda forces in Afghanistan lack the strength to retake Kabul and have been repeatedly defeated in battles in remote areas. And the United States has the aid of NATO in Afghanistan, which is expanding the scope of its operations.

Carpenter's other error is thinking that *ad hoc* terrorist groups pose the major strategic threat to American interests. Al Qaeda is actually one of the lesser problems in the region. Terrorism is the tactic of the weak. There was no surge of Al Qaeda forces across the Middle East after September 11 as there was a surge of Japanese forces across Asia after Pearl Harbor. Carpenter cites a report from the leftist Center for American Progress, which calls improved explosives and suicide bombers "sophisticated." What reliance on such weapons actually indicates is a movement weak in numbers, unable to contest for control of territory or the state. In terms of the stages of warfare, they are at the very bottom rung. Carpenter is closer to the truth when he mentions that the stronger resistance now being met by Coalition forces in Afghanistan is from the opium farmers and the drug cartels.

The more dangerous threat in Iraq is the sectarian strife of militias and hit squads rooted in the Sunni and Shiite communities. The gravest threat to the survival of the U.S.-backed democratic government in Baghdad is Muqtada al-Sadr, who has a political movement, a militia, and support from Iran.

The White House's identification of state-supported terrorism as being a greater danger than *ad hoc* cells has been proved correct. Hezbollah and Hamas have been much more successful than Al Qaeda. They established territorial

enclaves, armed and financed by Iran and Syria. Even before Hamas won the election in Gaza, it was acting as an alternative regime. Hezbollah surged into southern Lebanon after Israel withdrew from the buffer zone she had been holding. In July, Israel was forced to rectify this error and counterattack back into Lebanon.

The waging of war is expensive even in a low-intensity setting, and only states can muster the resources needed to pursue ambitions on a scale grand enough to be considered strategic. And behind Iran and Syria are China and Russia, who have provided diplomatic and material support.

So even if one accepts Carpenter's false-choice argument, it is still more important to determine who will rule in Baghdad, because Iraq has far more resources at stake than does Afghanistan. And who rules in any capital is more important than finding the mud hut in which Osama bin Laden spends the night.

We must continue to combat terrorist groups because their fanatics may be plotting mass murder in the morning. But Carpenter has his priorities reversed if he thinks we should give up the larger prize to pursue the smaller.

—William R. Hawkins
Burke, VA

Dr. Carpenter Replies:

Bill Hawkins makes some plausible arguments, but he makes others that are just strange. For example, his allegation that I "attempt to blame everything on an alleged shift of focus from Afghanistan to Iraq" ignores major portions of my article. In particular, I devoted considerable space to how the conflation of the War on Drugs with the war against the Taliban and Al Qaeda has greatly complicated the latter. There are other factors as well that have led to a regrouping of insurgent forces in Afghanistan. Those factors include Washington's reluctance to pursue enemy fighters into Pakistan (fearing that such a measure would undermine the fragile government of Pervez Musharraf) and the unresolved ethnic tensions within Afghanistan herself. On the latter point, it is no coincidence that the largely Pashtun Taliban is enjoying its greatest revival in the predominantly Pashtun regions of southern Afghanistan. Space

limitations precluded me from discussing those issues in any detail, but I have written about them elsewhere.

Although all of those factors have played a role in the resurgence of the Taliban and Al Qaeda, Hawkins is wrong to imply that the Bush administration's shift of focus from Afghanistan to Iraq was irrelevant. Redeploying Special Forces units, in particular, came at a crucial time. We had the insurgents on the ropes and let them get away. As any boxer can testify, that is a huge error in any fight. All too often, the opportunity to administer a knockout blow does not come again. That certainly appears to be the case in Afghanistan.

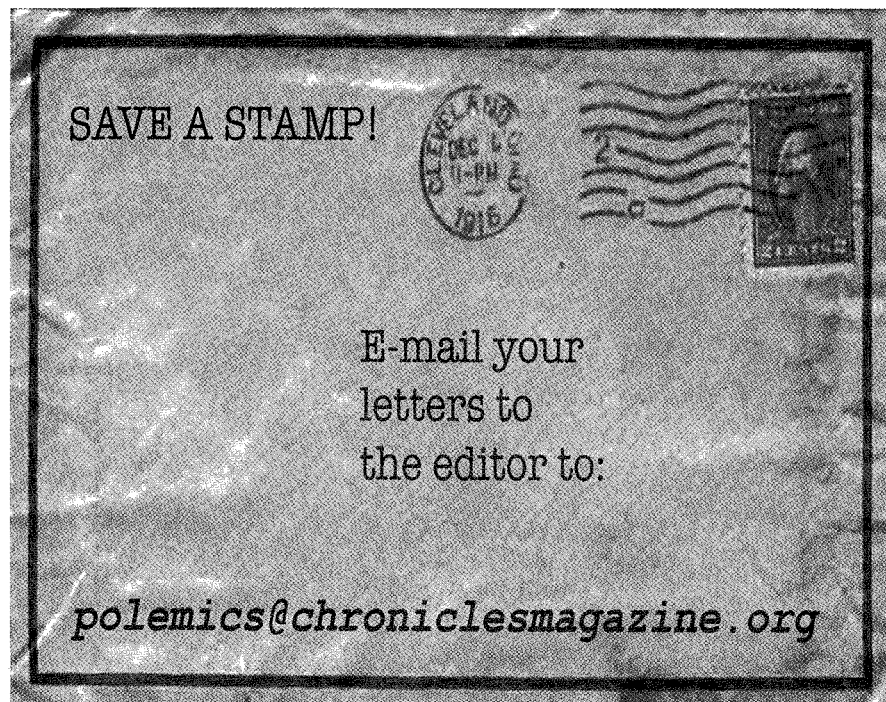
I agree with Hawkins that there is a difference between defeating and eradicating an enemy. But the trend in Afghanistan does not suggest that even a credible defeat is certain any longer. Hawkins minimizes the strength of the Taliban and Al Qaeda threat, because those forces are not able to take Kabul and other cities. But that is the wrong metric. The insurgents show a disturbing potential to make the country ungovernable. That may be all that is needed to inflict a defeat on the United States in the war against radical Islamic terrorists.

It is gratifying that Hawkins recognizes that terrorism is the tactic of the weak and does not pose a lethal strategic threat to the United States. That is a refreshing contrast to the view of Newt Gingrich, Joe Lieberman, and many other überhawks that the threat posed by radical Islamic

terrorism constitutes World War III. It is important to keep the terrorist problem, nasty as it is, in perspective.

Unfortunately, the appropriate skepticism that Hawkins displays on that point is more than offset by his views on Iraq. He embraces virtually every fallacy of the Bush administration's stay-and-die strategy. His argument that it is important "to determine who will rule in Baghdad" is breathtakingly naive. Unless the United States is prepared to occupy Iraq for decades with several hundred thousand troops, it is simply beyond our capacity to determine who will rule in Baghdad over the long term. There is mounting evidence that Iraq has already descended into a sectarian civil war. The latest reports from the United Nations and other sources confirm that more than 100 people are dying of political violence each day. That is happening in a country with a population of barely 27 million. The equivalent fatality rate in the United States would be more than 1,100 per day, or some 400,000 per year. If we were suffering that degree of carnage, there would be little debate about whether we were experiencing a civil war.

By invading and occupying Iraq, we destabilized the country and made the current bloody chaos inevitable. By shifting our focus from Afghanistan to Iraq, we sacrificed an achievable victory in an arena directly relevant to America's security to pursue the chimera of a stable, democratic, pro-Western Iraq. It was a spectacularly bad trade.



Post-Lebanon II: Constructing Narratives

A friend who has just returned from Lebanon told me that one of the jokes he heard before leaving Beirut was that the Bush administration decided to hire Hezbollah as one of the faith-based organizations that would help in the rebuilding of post-Katrina Louisiana. After all, the Lebanese Shiite group has been assiduously reconstructing the destroyed areas of Lebanon in the aftermath of the Israeli bombing, while there are no signs that many parts of Louisiana that were devastated by Katrina are going to be rebuilt anytime soon. So, perhaps, it's time to inject some Middle Eastern know-how into the process of rebuilding Louisiana.

In a way, the joke is on Israel and her American patron who, on the eve of Lebanon II, had created expectations for a rerun of the 1967 Six-Day War. According to the scenario drawn by the Israeli and U.S. governments and their neoconservative propagandists, the IDF would decimate Hezbollah in a few days and win a Big Victory for the "War on Terror." From the neocon perspective, the plot line of the Middle East Movie was obvious: Iran and Syria encourage their proxy in Lebanon, Hezbollah, to deliver a blow to America's proxy in the Middle East, Israel, as a way of shifting the balance of power in the Middle East in favor of Tehran and Damascus. Then, Israel delivers a counterblow to Hezbollah and reshifts the balance of power in favor of Washington—a win against the Axis of Evil.

Instead, it is looking more like a draw, at best, or a perception of a Hezbollah victory, at worst. "We have been driven into something we didn't want to do," Anthony H. Cordesman of the Center for Strategic and International Studies in Washington told the *New York Times*. "Far from Israel being the American proxy in a war against Iran, we've become Israel's proxy in its war against Hizbollah," he said.

Israel's miscalculations have been so serious that its only hope for victory is to have the United States and the international community do for Israel what it can't do militarily, which is defeat Hezbollah, assemble an international force in Lebanon and bring some sort of

endgame to all this.

So it was not surprising that the Bushies and their neoconservative scriptwriters were angry and confused. As military analyst Amir Oren reported in *Haaretz* ("No time to lose," July 29), in the middle of the first week of Lebanon II,

a close personal friend of U.S. President George Bush, who is also a generous donor to the Republican Party, called an Israeli friend who is a senior officer in the Israel Defense Forces. "What's happening with you?" he asked, as angry as he was disappointed. "The best army in the region, one of the best armies in the world, is messing for two weeks with a terrorist organization three kilometers from the border, and the rockets keep falling on its population centers? We sent our army to bleed 6,000 miles from home after September 11. What's stopping you?"

Oops . . . Something not very funny happened to the neocon paradigm on the way to southern Lebanon. This is what happens in the "game of expectations" when you create a sense that "victory is at hand," which is exactly the lesson the U.S. military was taught in Vietnam when, despite their victory over the Vietcong during the 1968 Tet Offensive, the perception among Americans was that the Vietcong had won. After all, how could you talk about "light at the end of the tunnel" when the communist guerrillas were almost able to overrun the U.S. embassy in Saigon?

Similarly, while Israel delivered a major blow to Hezbollah's military and political infrastructure in southern Lebanon and Beirut, it was clear that, contrary to earlier Israeli expectations, Israeli air power and hours of deadly bombardment failed to neutralize the entire military power of the Shiite group and put an end to the launching of deadly *Katyushas* into Israel. Moreover, Israeli commando and elite units that were dispatched into southern Lebanon to kill or capture the Hezbollah guerrillas ended up facing stronger than expect-

ed resistance that resulted in a relatively high number of Israeli casualties. The Israelis were embarrassed after the military leaked to the media that Hezbollah's leader, Hassan Nasrallah, was captured. It turned out that Israeli troops had detained a different Hassan Nasrallah—a Lebanese shop owner.

Adding drama to the Israeli sense of let-down was the discrepancy between the promises made by the Israeli political and military leaders to kill Nasrallah and the reality at the time of the cease-fire. In a nationally televised talk show on the first day of Lebanon II, members of an Israeli audience were seen singing:

Yallah, Yallah, Nasrallah. We're going to screw you, inshallah. We're going to return you to Allah, with all of Hezbollah Yallah, Yallah, Nasrallah, get out of here, you piece of trash. It's written from above, that it's all over for you.

By the end of Lebanon II, however, the charismatic Nasrallah seemed to be alive and well and was transformed into the hero of the Arab Street, having stood up to the mighty military power of the American-Israeli axis—and survived. Iran and Syria were also depicted as winners in this war.

Meanwhile, Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert, boasting of Israeli military success in Lebanon, sounded more and more like Bush declaring victory in Iraq—not that there's anything wrong with that, according to neoconservative columnist David Brooks. "And so it's clear that [the Israelis] didn't achieve what they thought they were going to achieve," Brooks explained on PBS's *NewsHour With Jim Lehrer*. "And now the question is: Can they create a narrative of victory which will give them a chance to get out?" You see, as with Iraq, it's all about the narrative, stupid!

As the Poles, Irish, and Italians would admit, however, you don't win wars with the most creative "narratives." Israel now finds herself in a more vulnerable position in the Middle East than before Lebanon II. Not only will she confront a

more hostile Arab world, but her failure to win the military confrontation with Hezbollah in a swift manner is bound to raise major questions about her ability to deter future challenges from the region's other countries and nonstate groups. At the same time, U.S. officials are likely to begin questioning their long-held axiom that Israel is a "strategic asset" of the United States in the Middle East. Some would argue that she has proved to be more of a "burden" for U.S. interests this time. Hence, Israel's great desire to reassert her deterrence power ASAP.

It is also unclear whether Hezbollah's better-than-expected performance will translate into a long-term political win. While the Shiite militia/social-services organization enjoys the political support of the majority of Lebanon's Shiites (now more than 40 percent of the population) and is expected to achieve its goal of exchanging the Israeli soldiers it kidnapped with Lebanese prisoners that Israel is holding, the members of the Maronite, Sunni, and Druze communities are bound to resist continued efforts by Hezbollah to challenge the Israelis.

Backed by the mostly European peace-keeping troops dispatched by the United Nations, it is not inconceivable that the non-Shiite Lebanese, led by Prime Minister Fouad Siniora, would confront Hezbollah in a way that could renew the civil war in Lebanon, turning the country into a battlefield in which pro-Iran Shiites would be fighting pro-Western Sunnis and their allies, while, in neighboring Iraq, pro-Iranian Shiites—backed by the United States—would continue battling anti-Western Sunnis. Now *there* is an interesting narrative. 

CULTURAL REVOLUTIONS

THE GOP's latest legislative attack on the South provides a good look at just how far the Republicans have gone on their racial and multicultural guilt trip.

In July, President Bush and his Myrmidons saddled the country, in general, and Dixie, in particular, with a 25-year extension of the ill-conceived Voting Rights Act. If ever a piece of legislation provided the opportunity for an alleged conservative Republican to demonstrate at least a little backbone, it was this one. Alas, it wasn't to be. In fact, it is a miracle a few Republican worthies weren't trampled to death in the mad rush of pachyderms to vote for the bill. In the Senate, this relic passed 98-0; in the House, 390-33.

Fearing the R word, Republicans from the South lined up against their homes and people. Here in the Shenandoah Valley, Rep. Bob Goodlatte was true to form. Citing some 700 alleged violations of the Act—18 of them in Virginia—he voted "Aye." Rep. Frank Wolf, a Republican who represents the multicultural mess known as Northern Virginia, joined the lowing herd with Virginia's two senators, George Allen and John Warner.

Passed in 1965, the Voting Rights Act requires most of the South and a few other states to get the federal government's imprimatur before running an election. The idea was to correct racial discrimination at the ballot box, and, because white Southerners are untrustworthy and innately evil, any changes in local election law, even the date of an election, became subject to federal review. The bill was thrice renewed, then extended again in July, when Bush, an alleged Texan, signed it into law. In keeping with the

times, the latest installment includes requirements to publish ballots in Spanish.

Whatever real or imagined wrongs the Voting Rights Act was meant to address 40 years ago have long passed into memory. Dangerous as it is to quote River City's resident *philosophe*, George Will, even a broken clock is right twice a day: "Today there are 43 African-American members of the House and Senate and more than 9,000 elected state and local officials. The state with the largest number? Mississippi. Second and third? Alabama and Louisiana. So why the continuing pretense that the right to vote is, for African-Americans, precarious and, unless the full VRA is preserved forever, perishable?" Indeed, and not to mention that Virginia's chief justice is black, and Ol' Virginny stands as the only state that has elected a black governor (if we don't count Bill Clinton and Howard Dean).

Granted, a very few counties in a very few states elsewhere in the country are subject to its rules, but, by and large, the Voting Rights Act is aimed at the South, which means that the act's extension is less an urgently required remedy to redress wrongdoing than a leftist cannon meant to plaster the South with eternal guilt not only for slavery and secession but for the Klan and Jim Crow, Tillman and Thurmond and Wallace and Maddox, attack dogs and fire hoses, white water fountains and colored bathrooms . . . everything the evil old South supposedly represents. It's a wonder anyone named Davis or Lee is permitted to vote. Revanchist Southerners, after all, are always up to no good.

One might think that this view is confined to Al Sharpton and the disgruntled blacks he represents, who quickly warned that Dubya had better step-an'-fetchit in enforcing the act. But apparently, Goodlatte, Wolf, and Allen, as well as the others who went North on the bill, also believe it.

Not surprisingly, none of these three is a native Virginian. Goodlatte and Wolf are Yankees—the former from Holyoke, Massachusetts; the latter from Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Allen, boiled in oil a few years ago when someone noticed that he had unfurled the Confederate Battle Flag in a weak moment, landed in Virginia on transferring from UCLA to UVa. An adult lifetime in Virginia ought to engender some loyalty to a man's adopted home. But these three politicians, and other carpetbaggers and even some real sons of the South who backed the Voting Rights Act, are loyal to just one master: the Republicrat Axis of Evil and its Grand Panjandrum.

Southern voters who think they know these tribunes of the people are mistaken. For starters, like all modern politicians, they are cosmically silly. Allen and Wolf actually conjured up legislation to stop drowning in pools, and, a few years ago, Goodlatte peddled a risible press release announcing that he fully supports learning to read. How's that for going way out on a radical limb?

These men are not even limited-government conservatives. They vocally support their Republican vizier's record-breaking spending binge and misguided, bloody crusade in Mesopotamia. They are conservative only in the sense that

National Review or Norman Podhoretz is conservative—which means they aren't. For these men, as for most Republicans, ties of blood and land and kith and kin mean nothing.

In practice, the Voting Rights Act won't affect much in Virginia or anywhere else because violations rarely occur, and those that do occur are more likely innocent than inspired by the kind of racial animosity that Sharpton and his tub thumpers spin fairy tales about. Thus, like much of what the left does with the happy assistance of the Beltway Right, it's all about symbolism. Because voting rights are not in danger, these men have symbolically punished the people they claim to represent. And they did so by perpetuating two clichéd but powerful ideological symbols: desperately needed legislation to enshrine racial equality as "the law of the land," and evil white Southerners who stop blacks from voting. Which only makes Goodlatte & Co.'s voting for the act particularly loathsome. They conscripted the law to serve a lie. The politicians know it. The pundits know it. The voters know it.

And yet, white Southerners believe it.

—R. Cort Kirkwood

THE PRO-LIFE principles of President Bush have often been questioned (not least in these pages), but, in late August, the President confounded his critics and firmly established his credentials as the most pro-life occupant of the Oval Office since Bill Clinton.

In 1999, the Food and Drug Administration approved "Plan B," the "morning-after pill," for prescription use. Essentially just a massive dosage of the hormones found in standard birth-control pills, Plan B, taken within 72 hours of sexual intercourse, prevents pregnancy in two ways: first, by frustrating fertilization; and, failing that, by keeping the fertilized egg—the embryo—from implanting in the womb. In other words, the drug sometimes acts as a contraceptive and sometimes as an abortifacient, just as standard birth-control pills do.

The acting commissioner of the FDA, Andrew Von Eschenbach, had announced at the end of July (the day before his confirmation hearing) that he would consider approving Plan B for over-the-counter use by women over the age of 18. Then, during an August 21 news conference, President Bush declared that "I believe that Plan B ought to be—ought to

require a prescription for minors. That's what I believe." In case there was any doubt about where he stood, he added that he supported "Andy's decisions."

Three days later, the FDA approved the application by Barr Laboratories, maker of Plan B.

In the days that followed, the same pro-life groups who had, a month before, applauded the President's "courageous" decision to veto funding for expanded embryonic stem-cell research expressed their dismay over this turn of events. They failed, however, to understand the subtlety of President Bush's actions in defense of life. As luck would have it, Robert T. Miller, an assistant professor at the Villanova University School of Law, was ready to explain it to us on the *First Things* blog.

"People in the pro-life movement," Miller wrote, "need to keep their heads and realize that there are legal and political realities that limit an officeholder's freedom." St. Thomas More, he argued, understood this well, and he quoted from More's *Utopia*: "In a commonwealth and in the councils of princes, if ill opinions cannot be quite rooted out, and you cannot cure some received vice according to your wishes, you must not therefore abandon the commonwealth, for the same reasons you should not forsake the ship in a storm because you cannot command the winds. . . . You ought rather to cast about and to manage things with all the dexterity in your power, so that if you are not able to make them go well they may be as little ill as possible."

In other words, what Miller understood, and those poor benighted pro-lifers did not, is that principles mean nothing if you don't have the power to impose them. Senators Hillary Clinton (D-NY) and Patty Murray (D-WA) were holding up Andrew Von Eschenbach's confirmation over Plan B. After he announced that he would approve Plan B for over-the-counter use, his confirmation proceeded. A simple compromise allowed the Bush administration to win that battle. Now that Von Eschenbach's confirmation is assured, think of how many babies he will be able to save when the next abortifacient drug comes up for approval! It's the happiest ending since the Man for All Seasons made his little compromise and agreed to swear his allegiance to the Act of Succession, thus living to fight another day.

What's that? You say it didn't happen that way? Thomas More went to his

death rather than swear the oath? Surely you must be mistaken. After all, if President Bush wasn't following More in compromising his principles in order to save them, that would mean that he really has no problem with the widespread over-the-counter use of Plan B, which will lead to countless abortions of children conceived the way that God intended. And that would suggest that his commitment to the right to life of embryos created in test tubes—embryos he surely must realize should never have been created in the first place—might be nothing more than election-year rhetoric. You can't really expect a loyal Republican to contemplate—much less believe—such an outlandish idea, can you?

Quick—call Robert Bolt! We need a rewrite. We have a few weeks left before the midterm elections. What? He died over a decade ago? Then get me Stephen Colbert! With a little truthiness, St. Thomas More might still be able to save the day.

—Scott P. Richert

SIR ALFRED SHERMAN, R.I.P. My dear friend and long-time associate Sir Alfred Sherman, who died in London on August 26, started his long political life as a Stalinist and ended it as one of the few "paleo" thinkers in today's Britain. He will be remembered as the man who first invented "Thatcherism" and then explained it to Margaret Thatcher in the 1970's. To those who knew him, however, Sir Alfred will always be the brilliant polymath and consummate *homo politicus* who did not suffer fools gladly and who never minced his words. In the early 1980's, he gave an interview to a Russian journalist in which he was quoted as saying, "As for the lumpen, coloured people and the Irish, let's face it, the only way to hold them in check is to have enough well armed and properly trained police." To his shocked critics, Sherman dryly replied that the quotation missed the word "proletariat" after "lumpen" and denied using the phrase "well armed."

Born in 1919 to immigrants from Russia, he joined the Young Communist League in his first year at Chelsea Polytechnic; as he later explained, "to be a Jew in 1930s Britain was to be alienated. The world proletariat offered us a home." Within months, he was a machine gunner with the Major Attlee battalion of the International Brigades in Spain; he then fought at Ebro in 1938 and spent several

months as Franco's prisoner at San Pedro de Cardenas before being repatriated to Britain.

During World War II, Sherman served with the British Army as a field security officer in the Middle East, became fluent in Hebrew and Arabic, and embarked on a lifelong study of Islam. After the war, he continued his studies at the London School of Economics and became president of the Communist Party student cell.

In that capacity, he visited Yugoslavia, at that time one of Moscow's staunchest allies, and, upon his return, prepared a favorable report. As he was about to deliver it to his comrades in the summer of 1948, news came of Stalin's break with Tito. The Party asked Sherman to rewrite his report accordingly. He refused and was duly expelled for "Titoist deviationism." Sherman promptly left for Belgrade and offered his services to Tito's authorities in their dispute with Moscow. He assumed his talents as an intellectual would be of value, but, to his surprise, he was sent to a "Voluntary Youth Brigade" to build a railway in Bosnia.

In the early 1950's, Sherman—by that time, an ex-communist but still a man of the left—returned to Belgrade as a correspondent for the *Observer*. Unlike most of his Western colleagues (then and now), he was fluent in Serbo-Croatian (as it was at that time) and possessed an encyclopedic knowledge of the history, culture, and politics of the South Slavs. He developed a lifelong affinity for the Serbs, comparable in depth and passion to that of Dame Rebecca West. That affinity was rekindled in the 1990's, when Sherman became a leading critic of Western policy in the Balkans.

After a few years in Israel, during which he advised the government on economic affairs, Sherman returned to London. Thoroughly disillusioned with socialism in all its forms, he joined the staff of the *Daily Telegraph* in 1965, rising to become the Tory flagship's lead writer (1977-86). In 1974, he cofounded, with the late Sir Keith Joseph, the conservative Centre for Policy Studies (CPS), becoming its first director. (He was ousted from the CPS in 1984 after he fell out of favor with the Tory leadership.) The CPS served as Margaret Thatcher's launching pad, gradually transforming her from the untried party leader of 1974 into a prime-minister-in-waiting. More than any other man, Sherman provided her with the strategy for capturing the leadership of

the party and winning the historic general election of 1979.

Sherman's star shone briefly after Mrs. Thatcher became prime minister. In her memoirs, she pays tribute to his "brilliance," the "force and clarity of his mind," his "breadth of reading and his skills as a ruthless polemicist." She credits him with a central role in her achievements, both as leader of the opposition and after she became prime minister. As the *Telegraph's* obituarist has noted, Sherman's mastery of Marxist dialectic made him a formidable logician: "[A]t his best he could be witty, educated and shrewd on economic matters, but he could also be breathtakingly naive, never losing the instinctive fanaticism" of an old Party man. This "instinctive fanaticism"—or, more accurately, his unwillingness to make compromises with the establishmentarian consensus—never made him clubbable in the world of British politics.

By 1982, the latent strains in his relationship with Mrs. Thatcher became fully apparent. She complained that he was dismissive of the obstacles she was encountering in dismantling the legacy of decades of socialism, while he berated her for betraying the promise of her early years. (In the 90's, Sherman mused that "Lady Thatcher is great theatre as long as someone else is writing her lines.") After his exclusion from her inner circle, she continued to regard him with "exasperated affection" and rewarded him with a knighthood in 1983. In July 2005, they were reunited at a reception marking the publication of Sherman's last book—which bore a revealing title: *Paradoxes of Power: Reflections on the Thatcher Interlude*.

In the last decade and a half of his life, Sherman was tireless in exposing the stupidity and malevolence of Western policy in the Balkans. His view that such policy has come as a result of Western crisis, not of Balkan tragedies, stemmed directly from his key insight that Washington's drive for hegemony is based on a new cultural paradigm, materialistic and antitraditional. This megalomania is a form of

madness, he argued in an editorial on *ChroniclesMagazine.org* three years before the Iraq invasion: "The power and prestige of America is in the hands of people who will not resist the temptation to invent new missions, lay down new embargoes, throw new bombs, and fabricate new courts. This is the opportunity they sense, and we must ask what ambitions they will declare next . . . Instead of rediscovering the virtues of traditionally defined, enlightened self-interest in the aftermath of its hands down cold war victory, America's foreign policy elites are more intoxicated than ever by their own concoction of benevolent global hegemony and indispensable power."

The project is coming to grief, as Sherman knew it would, but, since his advice often took the form of a recommendation to prefer pain today to disaster tomorrow, he found few patrons or disciples. As Michael Stenton has noted, wilting patrons found the message too clear, and possible disciples were skeptical of the typical Sherman claim that the wickedness of the world does not much change.

May he rest in peace.

—Srdja Trifkovic

OBITER DICTA: Our poet this month is **Constance Rowell Mastores** of Oakland, California. Her poems have appeared in *Artweek*, the *Atlanta Review*, *Bellowing Ark*, *Blue Unicorn*, *Boulevard*, *Coracle*, *DAYbreak*, the *Lyric*, *Modern Haiku*, the *Neovictorian/Cochlea*, *Poetry Flash*, *Rattapallax*, *Tiger's Eye*, and *Visions International*, among others.

The cover photo, provided by executive editor **Scott P. Richert**, is of the old National Lock building on Rockford's southeast side. Founded by three Swedish immigrants in 1903, the company originally produced mortise furniture locks. That business now operates out of Mauldin, South Carolina, under the name CompX International.

Our interior art is provided by our designer, **Melanie Anderson**. Mrs. Anderson received her B.F.A. from Northern Illinois University.

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The Root of All Evil

When George Bernard Shaw decided to devote himself to the destruction of civilization (or, as he would have preferred to call it, the cause of socialism), he spent years studying political economy. As Chesterton put it in a book devoted to his longtime friend,

Here was a man who could have enjoyed art among the artists, who could have been the wittiest of the flaneurs; who could have made epigrams like diamonds and drunk music like wine. He has instead labored in a mill of statistics and crammed his mind with all the most dreary and the most filthy details . . .

Northcote Parkinson, who cites the passage in *Left Luggage* (appropriately subtitled *A Caustic History of British Socialism From Marx to Wilson*), concludes that, of all the British socialists since William Morris, Shaw was the only one with a gift to squander, the only one to have made "a tremendous sacrifice on the altar of socialism."

There is another, less subtle conclusion to be drawn. Imagine, a man of Shaw's brilliance and erudition, grinding away at thousands of passages of drab social statistics, year after year—and what is the result? The socialist platform of the British Labour Party. A child or, better yet, a libertarian could have told him he was wasting his time. Get off on the wrong foot (the left), and you can never get back to the right one. How could Shaw and so many other lesser but nonetheless intelligent people go so far astray? If economics is a science, as classical liberals insist, then how does Marxism—the economic equivalent of phlogiston or spontaneous generation—maintain itself?

The most obvious answer is that, if economics is a science, it is an ethical science, one that deals not with absolutes but with the approximations of human society. As such, it can describe certain general tendencies; it can say what will probably happen as the consequence of certain individual decisions or political policies, but it can never say what a given individual will do, faced with rising prices,

much less what he ought to do. Ethics as a whole deals with the sort of life that it is good for us to lead; economics, as one of the lower branches of this science, can only tell us (in theory) the most efficient way of getting what we want.

If we think that some form of socialism is the only just political and economic goal, then economic analysis can be used to find the best way of reaching it. This "market socialism" is roughly the approach taken by Tony Blair, Bill Clinton, and the Bush administration, where it sails under the colors of "compassionate conservatism." Economic theory cannot, however, tell us that the socialist dream, unrealistic though it may be, is unjust. And what sort of young man, forced to choose between an impractical dream of justice and a practical but unjust system, would not choose socialism? From the way that capitalists and libertarians frame their arguments—always aiming at the lowest instincts—I can only conclude that the sign on the Free Market door reads: FANATICS WANTED. NO IDEALISTS NEED APPLY.

Socialism is not simply impractical or an affront to the individual and his supposed rights—a quaint if long-explored philosophical theory. Socialism is wrong because it is fundamentally unjust and because it degrades humanity. It robs man of his moral duties toward his wife and children and diminishes his feeling of charity toward his neighbors and fellow countrymen. "I gave at the office" really means "I gave to the IRS." Socialism is the drabest of ideologies, and, whether we call it liberalism, the New Deal, the Great Society, or big-government conservatism, socialism suppresses the spirit of enterprise (not just business enterprise but all adventure) and makes the world a duller place.

Some Christians have been seduced by superficial similarities between Marxism and the voluntary communism practiced by early Christians in Jerusalem. Like celibacy, the ideal of communism proved an unbearable burden for all but a few, and in this recognition lies the seed of monasticism. A monastery, however, is not a state, and a state that imposed celibacy would have an even shorter life than



the two generations of communism imposed, albeit imperfectly, by the rulers of the Soviet Union.

If Christianity does not actually forbid private property, it has almost always had reservations about great wealth. When Calvinist friends speak of money as "the outward sign of grace," I assume they are really joking, though when George Gilder treats with religious awe the billionaire eccentric John Templeton—"Contemplating his work and wealth is like entering a cathedral"—I can only assume that George should have spent less time in corporate offices and more time in cathedrals.

Christ did not pander to the rich; He spoke, rather, of the difficulty of a rich man entering into the Kingdom of Heaven and gave us the chilling parable of Lazarus and Dives. Dives and his brothers, who would not listen to Moses and the Prophets, will not hear the Gospel, even if it is preached by Father Abraham (or Christ Himself). Jesus declared explicitly in the Beatitudes: "Blessed are ye poor: for yours is the kingdom of God." Even more plainly, His Mother exulted, "He hath put down the mighty from their seats, and exalted them of low degree. He hath filled the hungry with good things; and the rich he hath sent empty away."

In 1 Timothy 6:10, Saint Paul does not tell us that property or wealth is the root of all evil, but *philargyria*, the desire for (silver) money. It is a vice that Saint Paul elsewhere calls *pleonexia* ("more-havingness"), a word that implies that someone is never content with enough but is always reaching for more. Aristotle, who uses the same word, is hardly more temperate in his disdain. Breaking with Plato, Aristotle thought property was a natural good, because without it human life could not be sustained. But how much property is

enough? Aristotle does not say precisely, but since the highest human purpose is contemplation of God—as a philosopher, he would say “the good”—a serious man should have a house and land sufficient to provide for his necessities, without too much of the back-breaking labor that distorts the character and prevents a man from cultivating the liberal arts (poetry, music, rhetoric) and, ultimately, philosophy. In today’s terms, a nice little annuity providing \$50,000 *per annum* would allow a professional man to spend short weeks on honorable work and take long vacations, so long as he does not have to “buy” a condominium in Sarasota or stay in five-star hotels.

Aristotle says that money, unlike food, housing, weapons, or books, is an artificial form of property because most of us (except for goldsmiths) cannot actually do anything with gold or silver, much less with the ugly misproportioned slips of paper (ultimately worthless) we call Federal Reserve Notes—unless, like Scrooge McDuck, we take dry baths amid piles of coin. In a money-based economy such as ours, it is impractical to imagine doing without money, but it should not be made a god. Aristotle is even more emphatic about moneylending or, as we should now call it, banking. For money, an artificial form of property, to breed more money is unnatural. Significantly, the Greek for interest is *tokos*, which means “offspring.” To make money by breeding money is akin to artificial procreation, a violation of the law of God and nature. The same connection must have been made by Saint Paul, who frequently pairs *pleonexia* with sodomy: Both are vices contrary to nature that produce nothing real.

Aristotle, even more than Saint Paul, lived in a world whose *economics* (a word so habitually misused that it has become nearly useless) was quite different from our own, and he would doubtless have as many interesting things to say about the American system of capitalist-socialism as he did about Carthage, the state we most resemble. (Carthaginians were excellent businessmen, ruthless imperialists who relied heavily on mercenaries and killed their own babies for good luck.) It was Aristotle, after all, who first pointed out “the tragedy of the commons,” observing that, where property is owned by all, it is taken care of by none. He would certainly have learned to understand the value of investing in stocks and modified his objection to money-

lending if it made possible the construction of homes or the expansion of an honorable business.

Intellectual historians (who like to misappropriate the name *philosopher*) fail to grasp the significance of Aristotle’s thought. His contribution to science is not found in his mistakes in such matters as the number of legs on a spider or the rate of falling bodies but, for example, in his more general discussion of causation, his methodical approach to every question, his insistence on gathering evidence before coming to a conclusion. And Aristotle’s contribution to political economy is not limited by the economic system of fourth-century Greece, because his concern is not with efficiency but with justice and the good life.

Aristotle was raising the only important questions of ethics: What are the ends of human existence, and how do we attain them? His answer, roughly, is “happiness,” or the good life, which is to be attained in a community of family and friends who can satisfy one another’s material and social needs, behave justly toward one another, and, according to their capacity, contemplate the Good. Such an ideal—if it is a true ideal—does not change from age to age. It is valid in a Greek *polis*, in the Roman Empire, in medieval Christian France, and in post-Christian America. The material necessities—and the means of getting them—will take different forms, but the goal remains the same, as do the means (generally speaking).

This reality has been obscured by a series of political theorists who have emphasized individual acquisitiveness—that is, *pleonexia*—as a primary good. This was the great error of classical liberals, who were otherwise right about many lesser questions having to do with how an economy should be managed (or rather, should not be managed). Even when liberals have written of the community or society, their tendency is to think primarily of a means of satisfying an individual’s material desires. Socialists are even worse, because they insist on imposing the liberals’ degraded understanding of human existence on all of humanity. There have been deeper socialist thinkers (William Morris, the Guild Socialists), who challenged the liberal notion of man, but they were quickly eclipsed. For a century, socialists, while making obligatory references to human brotherhood, have drawn up plan after plan with only one object: to turn the working class into

the spitting image of the greedy capitalist oppressors they claim to hate. When there was a “conservative” opposition, it opposed both liberalism and socialism for reducing human beings to libidinous viruses forever seeking to expand their supply of junk, like the Mexican gourmet chef in Carlos Fuentes’ *The Crystal Frontier* who bought everything he saw advertised on TV. Soon, he had to rent warehouse space to house all the useless stuff he had amassed. He might have been named the Ludwig von Mises man of the year.

Where liberals and libertarians like to reduce complex questions down to the simplistic formulae of Mill or Smith or Mises, and leftists continue to repeat the long-refuted speculations of Marx, conservatives have contented themselves with what they knew to be imperfect knowledge that buttressed loyalties derived more from the heart than from political pamphlets. The heroes of conservatives are more like beloved uncles than the exotic foreign gurus that inspire the “two and seventy jarring sects” of the supposititious right.

A conservative—not just a “true conservative” (which is probably a contradiction in terms), but anyone with a conservative instinct—will never put the cart of policy before the horse of purpose. In confronting such political questions as immigration, trade, and foreign policy, he will instinctively reach—not always wisely—for the policy that seems to benefit his people. If he has a critical brain, he will analyze the numbers and probably come to the conclusion that both sides of an issue are lying—just a little, at least—but he will never make the mistake of confusing statistics with reality. Finally, he will not put the Great God Efficiency above the honor and interests of his own country. Before deciding how many prisoners can be efficiently stuffed into a concentration camp, there are a few more basic questions to attend to.

Here, finally, is the problem with the entire spectrum of debate over free trade and industrial decline, in which the only part of the spectrum that is represented is the narrow segment that runs from orange liberalism to red Marxism, from a neoconservative indifference to our neighbors’ well-being to a neoliberal ambition to return to Five Year Plans and industrial policies so long as they provide for market efficiency. Nothing good has come out of such a debate—and nothing ever will. ©

Passage
by Constance Rowell Mastores

How did the summer slip away
so casually this year? Without a sigh?
Without a nod to those who care?
Or does she still breathe among

the powdery wings that cling to a few
forgotten flowers? Still shed
her languid light on the purple sage,
the shriveled fig and rotting pear?

This is the pensive time of year,
this time of passing. The shadow
grows, the sweet light goes, and one
by one, the gentle ghosts move on.

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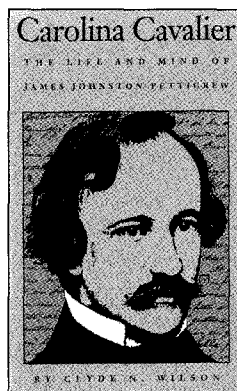
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Sins of Omission

by Roger D. McGrath

Atrocities Azteca

Nearly every celebration of Mexican heritage by Mexicans in the United States now features references to the Aztecs and some form of traditional Aztec dance, called *La Danza Azteca*. This would be something like the Irish celebrating Oliver Cromwell and the Cromwellian confiscations and settlement—only worse. Few Mexicans today, on either side of the border, are descendants of the Aztecs; their ancestors are the people the Aztecs conquered, enslaved, tortured, and sacrificed.

The Aztecs arrived in the Valley of Mexico sometime during the 13th century. Legend says they came from the north, a place they called Aztlán, which could have been in New Mexico or Arizona. Suffering a series of droughts and having exhausted the natural resources of Aztlán, they fought their way south, through tribe after tribe, finally arriving in the Valley of Mexico as a well-organized military aristocracy. Generation by generation, the Aztecs reduced the relatively advanced city-states they found in the valley, until, by the middle of the 15th century, they had become the predominant tribe, governing from their capital of Tenochtitlan, an island-city in Lake Texcoco.

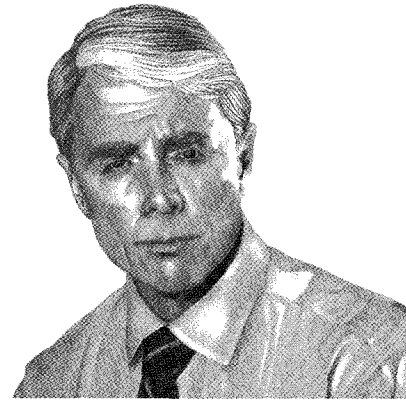
They enslaved other tribes or reduced them to vassals, collecting from the latter tribute in food, women, and victims for sacrifice. Although the Aztecs did not introduce human sacrifice to Mesoamerica—the Toltecs and Mayans were infamous for their bloodletting—they certainly practiced it on an unprecedented scale. The numbers of people—often girls entering puberty—sacrificed annually were in the thousands. Most anthropologists argue at least 20,000 humans were sacrificed each year. Several researchers put the number at more than 200,000. Woodrow Borah, the highly regarded chair of the U.C. Berkeley Center for Latin American Studies during the 1970's, claimed 250,000, although Borah also estimated the population of the Valley of Mexico during the 15th century at a seemingly impossible 25 million.

Early Spanish accounts say 20,000 were sacrificed annually in the capital city alone. The Aztecs claimed that, when they dedicated the great pyramid at Tenochtitlan, they sacrificed more

than 80,000 people in four days. In four lines that stretched for two miles, the victims were marched to the top of the pyramid and there dispatched by Aztec priests working in shifts. The numbers may have been Aztec hyperbole, but early Spanish chroniclers offer supporting evidence. Gonzalo de Umbria reckoned the number of skulls on the great rack in the center of Tenochtitlan at 136,000. Bernal Diaz said that, upon entering the central plaza of Xocotlan, "there were piles of human skulls so regularly arranged that one could count them, and I estimated them at more than a hundred thousand." Andres de Tapia described two immense towers made entirely of skulls held together by lime. There may have been more than 100,000 skulls in the towers. In account after account, in central plaza after central plaza, the number of skulls astonished the Spanish.

Aztec gods demanded flesh and blood, and flesh and blood is what the Aztecs gave them. Propitiation of the sun god was especially important. His life-giving light would fade forever without the hearts of humans. But the Aztecs also butchered people simply for food. Production of food became an ever-more-demanding problem during the 15th century, as the population of the Valley of Mexico swelled. Maize, beans, and squashes were grown in greater quantities by reclamation of land from marshes and lakes, but animal protein, supplied chiefly by wild game and by domesticated dogs and turkeys, was hard to come by. Human beings were a handy substitute. Most sacrificial victims—for the gods and for cannibalism—came from conquered tribes or from vassals as part of their regular tribute. Slaves were less commonly used. Aztecs themselves were never sacrificed.

The sacrifices began with *La Danza Azteca*. To the beat of drums and the wail of horns, splendidly feathered warriors moved their limbs and pranced about while sacrificial victims were prodded by spears or dragged by their hair up the pyramid steps. Once on top, they were immediately spread-eagle on their backs and Aztec priests, using obsidian knives, sliced open the victims' chests and cut



out their hearts. The priests then held the still-palpitating hearts to the sun and threw blood into the air. The bodies were quickly removed—to make room for the next set of victims—and allowed to tumble down the steep sides of the well-designed pyramid. Upon reaching the bottom, the corpses were carried off and butchered. Three limbs of a corpse were the property of the warrior who had captured the victim in battle. Heads were reserved for Aztec priests who cracked open the skulls to eat the brains. The skulls then joined thousands of others on racks or poles in central plazas. The remaining limb and other body parts were stewed with peppers and tomatoes and eaten by hungry Aztec warriors and their families. Some meat was saved for the carnivorous animals at the Aztec royal zoo.

The Spaniards were surprised to learn that the Aztecs had no desire to create a unified empire by conquering and assimilating surrounding tribes. Better to allow the tribes to remain as vassals or enemies who could then be forced to deliver sacrificial victims as tribute or suffer capture in war. The territory occupied by vassals or enemies amounted to human stockyards with no manpower or administrative costs to the Aztecs.

For those who present the Spanish conquest of Mesoamerica as the ignominious white man *versus* noble red man, the Aztecs present a problem. So, too, does the thought of Cortez and a few hundred soldiers conquering the all-powerful Aztecs. The Spaniards had the horse, weapons of iron, diseases not native to Mexico, and centuries of fighting the Moors, but they also had as allies the tribes who suffered unspeakable torture and mayhem at the hands of the Aztecs for a century—something those tribes' descendants should consider the next time the colorful *Danza Azteca* groups perform. ©

It's Hard Times, Cotton Mill Girls

Manufacturing, Gone With the Wind

by Tom Landess

Historians tend to make the same argument: The South lost the Civil War because its economy was agrarian rather than industrial, with too few munitions factories to supply Confederate troops with weapons and too few textile mills to clothe them. According to these same historians, the post-bellum sharecropper system proved to be an economic disaster, in part because it was grounded in agriculture. Only when the South turned to industry in the late 19th century did she begin to live for the first time. Color flooded into her cheeks. She was able to get her hair done and buy a couple of new dresses. Looking at herself in the mirror, she asked, "Why didn't I do this before?" The textile industry in the Carolinas is routinely cited as the best example.

Such historical accounts illustrate the degree to which the ideology of industrialism has wormed its way into the soul of the nation, as if Southern farms were never prosperous or even self-sufficient and all antebellum women went around wearing ragged dresses made from flour sacks, their hair perpetually in tangles.

At the beginning, the rise of the textile industry in the South primarily enriched Northerners. Eventually, Southerners scraped up enough capital to get into the game—or else, like Confederate Capt. John Montgomery of Spartanburg, secured the backing of New England investors.

The Northerners did not come South to save the conquered region from hoeing and plowing in the hot Southern sun. They came for the same reason 21st-century manufacturers have begun moving their operations to Mexico and other Third World countries: cheap land, cheap labor, and few legal restrictions. The South had no child-labor laws in the 19th century, and New England mill owners preferred to hire children because they were more submissive, cheaper, and less likely to strike.

Sarah Norcliffe Cleghorne, a New England Quaker, wrote a memorable quatrain on this subject.

The golf links lie so near the mill
That almost every day
The laboring children can look out
And see the men at play.

By the 1830's, the trade-union movement had begun to take hold in the Northeast; and, from the beginning, unions criticized child-labor practices (though not necessarily out of humanitarian concern). In 1836, Massachusetts outraged local mill owners by passing the first child-labor law, which required children under 15 working in factories to attend school at least

three months out of the year. In 1842, the state crossed the line between responsible government and zealotry by restricting the workday of children to ten hours.

Small wonder that, after the War Between the States, New Englanders saw in such states as South Carolina an oasis of half-starved children and few restrictive laws. With these optimum conditions, the textile industry blossomed in the Piedmont. In 1880, there were 14 mills in South Carolina. By 1920, there were 184, employing over 55,000 workers. And by 1925, the state boasted more mills than Massachusetts or any other state.

In order to lure folks down from the mountains, mill owners built entire villages for workers, the rent for each unit determined by the number of rooms. Lined up in rows on both sides of the street, the wood-frame houses were identical: Each was identically tiny, painted an identical off-white, its clapboard siding the color of unginced cotton. Each had an identical front porch almost too narrow to accommodate a metal glider comfortably, and the identical front lawns were so small they could easily be mowed in five minutes. Though mill houses were not in the backyards of owners, they were hauntingly reminiscent of the slave quarters. If these workers were not postbellum slaves, they were the Mexicans of the late 19th century.

In the South, the mills once again favored the hiring of children. In the late 1930's, Fannie Miles told a WPA interviewer about her first day at work in a textile mill:

I was just nine years old when we moved to a cotton mill in Darlington, South Carolina, and I started to work in the mill. I was in a world of strangers. I didn't know a soul. The first morning I was to start work, I remember coming downstairs feelin' strange and lonesome-like. My grandfather, who had a long, white beard, grabbed me in his arms and put two one-dollar bills in my hand. He said, "Take these to your mother and tell her to buy you some pretty dresses and make 'em nice for you to wear in this mill." I was mighty proud of that.

Her story was by no means unique. An old folk song (or perhaps quasifolk song) has as its chorus:

It's hard times, Cotton Mill Girls.
Hard times, Cotton Mill Girls.
It's hard times, Cotton Mill Girls, hard times every-
where.

A couple of stanzas reinforce the message:

Us kids worked 14 hours a day

Contributing editor Tom Landess is a retired English professor who has published a number of books and articles, many of which have appeared under his name.

For 13 cents of measly pay.
It's hard times, Cotton Mill Girls. It's hard times every-
where.

When I die don't bury me at all.
Just hang me up on the spinning wheel wall.
Pickle my bones in alcohol. It's hard times everywhere.

This, then, was the industrial revolution historians have come to admire, the one that brought prosperity to the South and its emancipation from the torturous drudgery of farm life. Of course, children worked on subsistence farms. But that was seasonal, and they were still able to attend school for much of the year. In fact—as advocates of a longer school year now point out—a lengthy summer vacation is a relic of the nation's agrarian past, originally built into the school calendar so children could work in the fields.

Eventually, child-labor laws came South, after much finger wagging and lecturing from New England, which—by the early 20th century—had forgotten its own history, just as, in an earlier time, it had forgotten who first brought slaves to America. Strikes came South as well. In 1929, violence erupted in Gastonia, North Carolina, in one of the bloodiest labor-management confrontations of that era.

Indeed, the world the textile industry made was quite different from the agrarian world the South was leaving behind. Among other things, industry produced a substantial blue-collar class that had not existed before. The mill workers—also known as “mill operatives”—became a political bloc and were mobilized by such historically significant South Carolina Democrats as Cole Blease and Olin D. Johnston, each of whom served as governor and as U.S. senator, largely because of their appeal to textile workers.

Yet, after more than 50 years of the redemptive textile industry and other industrial ventures, the region was still poor. In fact, in 1938, in the midst of the Great Depression, President Franklin D. Roosevelt called the South “the nation's number-one economic problem.”

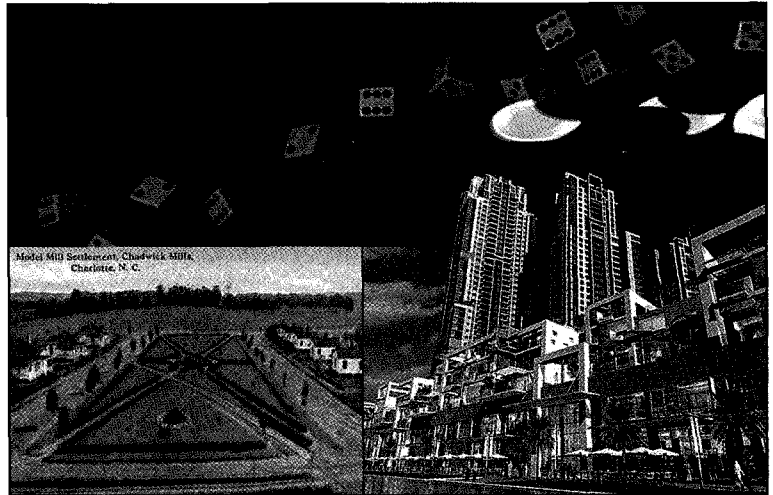
World War II took care of the Depression and the economic backwardness of the region. Today, the South is thriving—not only because of increased manufacturing but because of its expanding service economy, its financial institutions, and its tourism. Northern companies have migrated to Florida, North Carolina, and Texas to escape Northern cities, which have become dangerous and unlivable. Caught up in the euphoria of greed, Southern city councilmen, mayors, governors, and congressmen are knocking one another down, pulling hair and gouging eyes in their attempt to attract new companies to their respective jurisdictions. Members of Southern chambers of commerce have become, like ancient Jews, the watchers at the gate, scanning the northern horizon, looking for the Messiah to come roaring down I-95, driving a Lamborghini.

In the midst of all this prosperity, the textile industry has all but disappeared from South Carolina and neighboring states. In 2005, Spartanburg textile magnate Roger Milliken warned:

Since January 2001, nearly 300,000 textile and apparel jobs have been lost—and that number does not even include the job losses from the tragic Pillowtex bankruptcy. Moreover, the United States ran a \$61 billion trade deficit in textile and apparel goods in 2002. If the

federal government refuses to change the flawed trade policies that generated those numbers, the U.S. textile and apparel industry is in grave danger. The government needs to act now to save South Carolina and Georgia textile jobs.

Indeed, in 2001 alone, 62 Carolina mills closed. Many now blight the South Carolina landscape, windows broken, skirted by head-high weeds—red-brick eyesores waiting to become rubble heaps. As if to mock its own fate, a textile mill in Anderson has been transformed into a dinosaur museum.



No one knows for sure why dinosaurs disappeared from the face of the earth. But everyone agrees that the textile industry has died out because of international competition, principally from China. Spokesmen demand the return of quotas, arguing that China has been able to undersell American manufacturers by using slave labor and by subsidizing their industry.

Free-market economists reject this argument. Thus, Robert Barfield of the American Enterprise Institute has said: “The textile people have seen this coming for 10 years. The government should do something about trade adjustment assistance for workers whose jobs are put in jeopardy, but I don't think we ought to re-institute quotas.”

The history of textile mills in South Carolina—and in several other Southern states—gives new meaning to Robert Frost's line “Nothing gold can stay.” A once-lucrative industry is moribund. Mill villages—monuments to the idea that human beings are as alike as Ford carburetors—have become ghost towns, covered by green blankets of kudzu, or else salvaged by wrecking crews.

A century ago, the New South crowd would have bet their sacred fortunes that the textile industry would last until men and women stopped wearing clothes. Today, the same bunch is hailing the advent of high-tech companies and the automobile industry. After all, for New South adherents, paradise is always just around the corner, just over the next hill.

When presidential candidate John McCain was confronted by a textile worker who complained that his children would not be able to follow in his footsteps, Senator McCain replied:

Sir, I did not know that your ambitions were for your children to work in a textile mill, to be honest with you. I would rather have them work in a high-tech industry. I would rather have them work in the computer industry. I would rather give them the kind of education and train-

The history of textile mills in South Carolina gives new meaning to Frost's line "Nothing gold can stay."

ing that's necessary in order for them to really [sic] have prosperous and full lives.

Putting aside the effrontery of publicly lecturing a father on what's best for his children, Senator McCain was up to his chin in shallow water. Like earlier boosters of textile mills, he clearly believed in the immortality of present economic conditions, the inviolability of the fragile industrial dream. He drew the wrong lesson from the father's complaint. The global marketplace is just as dicey as Las Vegas, whether the industry be textiles or high-tech or computers.

Economist Paul Craig Roberts recently wrote:

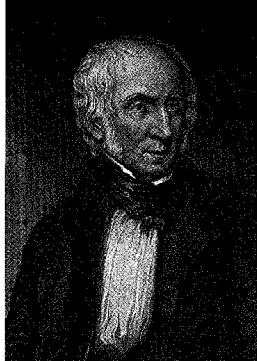
The declines in some manufacturing sectors have more in common with a country undergoing saturation bombing during war than with a super-economy that is "the envy of the world." Communications equipment lost 43% of its workforce. Semiconductors and electronic components lost 37% of its workforce. The workforce

in computers and electronic products declined 30%. Electrical equipment and appliances lost 25% of its employees. The workforce in motor vehicles and parts declined 12%.

The father who addressed Senator McCain saw a world disappear before his eyes, one he had taken for granted his entire life. He may have lived in a mill village; been a textile machine setter and operator since graduation from high school; fed yarn, thread, and fabric through guides, needles, or rollers; and eaten a peanut-butter sandwich for lunch. But for him, those things constituted a precious reality, his own piece of God's created order—even more so, perhaps, than the check at the end of the week. He could not believe that such fine particularities could be gone forever, stolen by people chattering in a strange language on the bottom side of the earth. He just asked Senator McCain to explain why this had happened and what could be done to bring back that lost world. He is still waiting for an answer.

The irony of this history—shorn of ideology and boosterism—should be apparent: Whatever light the textile industry brought to South Carolina and its neighbors, most of the same conditions existed that led William Blake to wonder if Jerusalem could be built "among these dark Satanic mills." From nine-year-old Fannie Miles to that bereft father, the victims are scattered across a hard century like so many stars. None of us has the wisdom to measure accurately the worth of the light against the darkness. If you took a survey, most people would vote for the light. But then, they probably never heard the children singing in high, frail voices: "It's hard times, Cotton Mill Girls, hard times everywhere." 

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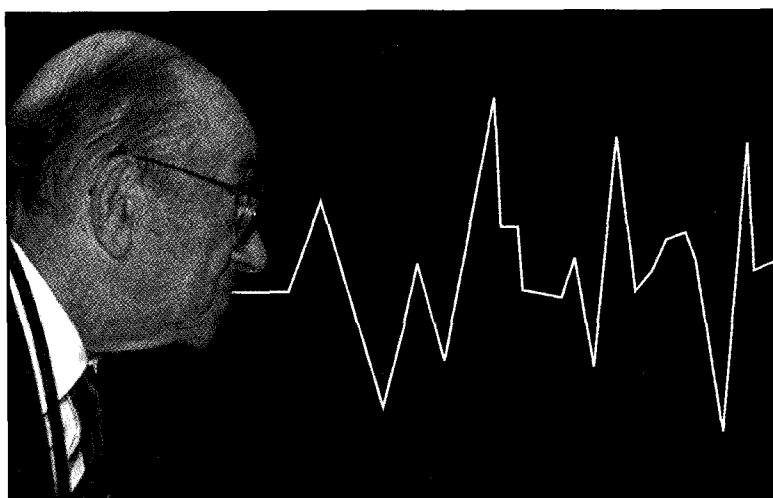
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How Neutral Is the Fed?

A Measure of Humility

by Greg Kaza



The Federal Reserve Act, passed at the close of 1913, created the current U.S. central bank in order to “establish a more effective supervision of banking in the United States.” However, in response to monetary-policy errors committed by the central bank, Congress has, from time to time, amended the act. For example, during the 1970’s, when Americans faced double-digit inflation and unemployment—for which, according to some critics, Fed policy was responsible—Congress passed the Humphrey-Hawkins Act of 1978, sponsored by Sen. Hubert Humphrey (D-MN) and Rep. Augustus Hawkins (D-CA), which required the Fed to establish a monetary policy for the country that would “promote effectively the goals of maximum employment, stable prices, and moderate long-term interest rates.” Of course, supporters of the central bank reject this sort of meddling and argue instead for a *laissez-faire* approach toward the Fed.

The Fed includes, according to its own literature, “a central governmental agency—the Board of Governors—in Washington, D.C., and twelve Regional Federal Banks.” The Federal Open Market Committee (FOMC) is a major component of the system. It includes members of the board of governors, the New York Fed president, and presidents of four other Fed member banks who serve on a rotating basis. Meeting eight times annually, the FOMC oversees the bank’s open-market operations, the main tool used by the Fed to influence monetary and credit conditions. The Fed chairman can also call the FOMC into teleconference whenever he deems it necessary. As an independent government agency, the board of governors

must comply with federal transparency provisions, including the Freedom of Information Act.

Proponents like to describe the Fed as a neutral umpire. Yet FOMC transcripts, released (after a five-year time lag) for an entire year’s worth of meetings, raise serious doubts about the impartiality of this powerful government agency.

The FOMC faced a crisis in the fall of 1998. Heavily leveraged trades by Long-Term Capital Management (LTCM), a private hedge fund, declined precipitously. LTCM’s money managers, including Nobel laureates reputed to be among the best in finance, had underestimated the impact of a Russian fiscal crisis on worldwide financial markets. LTCM imploded when investors fled *en masse* into the U.S. Treasury market (a safe haven) after the Russian government defaulted on its bond obligations and the ruble collapsed. Market liquidity declined dramatically, leading Treasury spreads to widen beyond historic norms, which caused LTCM’s leveraged portfolio to collapse. House Banking and Financial Services Committee Chairman Jim Leach (R-IA) later observed that LTCM had underestimated “the role of corruption in Russia.” This miscalculation threatened huge losses for large money-center institutions and European central banks who found themselves on the wrong side of the deal.

FOMC transcripts reveal that Greenspan was clearly worried as he addressed the October 15, 1998, FOMC teleconference. “At this stage, after 50 years of looking at the economy on almost a daily basis, I would say that I have never seen anything like the current situation,” he said. “Certainly, based on all the historic annals I have read, and I have done a good deal of reading in economic history, it would be an extremely rare event for this type of financial environment to emerge and eventually recede without having an impact on the economy.” His remarks, and the teleconference itself, are revealing on several levels.

First, Greenspan spent his 19-year tenure as a *government*

Greg Kaza is executive director of the Arkansas Policy Foundation, an economic-research organization founded in 1995 in Little Rock. His research on financial transparency has been published in academic journals in Asia, Europe, and North America.

economist preaching about the free-market order. “A free market capitalist system,” he said in a commencement address at Harvard in 1999, “cannot operate fully effectively unless all participants in the economy are given opportunities to achieve their best.” In a truly free market, there are failures as well as successes. There would be no bailout mechanism for LTCM in the market order described by Greenspan, who was once a disciple of Ayn Rand. LTCM and the banks that extended credit tried their best, delivered the worst, and failed. The financial institutions that extended LTCM credit would have taken their losses like men if Greenspan’s order really existed.

Instead, these large financial interests were allowed to hide behind the Fed’s skirt. New York Fed President William McDonough organized a deleveraging of the hedge fund’s book. Then Greenspan led the FOMC to cut the Intended Fed Funds rate three times to alleviate the crisis. The transcripts reveal that only one FOMC member, St. Louis Fed President William Poole, was courageous enough to express any concerns. “[I]s there any chance that action today could be viewed, by some anyway, as an effort to help bail out the hedge funds?” he asked.

American manufacturers have paid a steep price for the Fed’s errors.

Second, imagine the FOMC meeting to discuss altering monetary policy in response to a crisis faced by a major U.S. manufacturer. Vast industrial enterprises such as U.S. Steel, General Motors, and Chrysler are among America’s largest manufacturers operating in the real economy. They all faced their own economic crises during the 50 years Greenspan spent “looking at the economy on almost a daily basis.” In the late 1970’s, double-digit inflation and interest rates forced numerous manufacturers out of business. The Fed, under chairman Arthur Burns, had erred in letting the inflation genie out of the bottle earlier in the decade, and manufacturers and their employees were left to pay the tab. Still, the FOMC did not alter its monetary policy, because a “market order,” to the Fed, means that (to paraphrase Orwell) some economic animals are more equal than others.

If the financial institutions in the LTCM episode had been private U.S. manufacturing enterprises, they would have been told to liquidate their losses, lay off workers, reduce wages, eliminate benefits, and flagellate themselves as a reminder that they—not monetary forces in the United States and Asia—were responsible for their problems. Yet it was Fed-induced inflation that distorted manufacturers’ price structures in the 1970’s, and deflation imported from Asia has devastated producers since the mid-1990’s. But the Fed is not in the business of bailing out manufacturers—only financial services. For many, that is a particularly bitter pill to swallow, considering that LTCM employed a tiny fraction of the millions of workers employed by these great industrial enterprises. Yet it was big enough to manipulate the supposedly neutral Fed.

The LTCM debacle was not the first time the Fed displayed its benevolence toward money-center banks on the wrong side

of big losing trades. In 1994, these banks were exposed to huge losses in the Mexican bond market after the peso was devalued. The FOMC met on December 30, 1994, in another teleconference in which it approved a \$1.5 billion “supplementary facility” to help stabilize Mexican financial markets. Once again, private money managers had misread political and economic developments in foreign countries. The Fed rewarded this incompetence by organizing a bailout.

During the Mexican crisis, some of Wall Street’s biggest investment banks were caught holding large books of declining Mexican bonds. According to the FOMC’s December 30, 1994, transcript, Greenspan expressed surprise at the outstanding amount of *tesobonos* (peso-denominated Mexican bonds that are dollar-indexed). The transcript, which remains heavily redacted 12 years later, leaves little doubt that the FOMC was not meeting to organize a lifeboat for widows and orphans. Greenspan minced no words. He began by telling the panel, “The purpose of this conference call is to discuss the Mexican situation in which we and the Treasury have been fairly heavily involved during the last few days.” The panel met on the eve of a speech by Mexican Finance Minister Guillermo Ortiz, which was meant to calm restive financial markets. Page five of the transcript is especially instructive regarding how financial bailouts emerge with the Fed’s assistance. In the lone paragraph that has not been redacted, Greenspan states, “There is a case to be made for a significant amount of Congressionally appropriated funds to buy down a very large part of these tesobonos, which is effectively foreign aid. But it’s a type of foreign aid that probably would be rather wise for us to engage in.” He describes “a commercial banking package that is being initiated by [redacted] specifically, and it looks to be several billion dollars in size or at least that is what they are talking about.”

When the FOMC voted on the supplementary facility meant to ease the Mexican crisis, there was only one dissenting voice. According to the transcript, Richmond Fed President Al Broadus told Greenspan,

Specifically, I’m worried because even if we get this package—we get the speech, and we have the enlarged facility—it is not at all clear to me, and I’m sure it is not at all clear to anyone, that it is going to do the job. If that were our only choice, that would be something we could swallow, but what worries me is we are a party to it. We are now adding to our Federal reserve commitment and I am worried about that from the standpoint of our credibility.

Greenspan replied, “Okay. Are there any other questions or comments?”

Congress, unlike the Fed, is made up of elected citizens rather than unelected economists drawing government paychecks. Throughout the Fed’s history, some members of Congress have proved tenacious in uncovering the truth. In the LTCM episode, congressional pressure led the President’s Working Group on Financial Markets to issue a report stating that the New York Fed had encouraged 14 financial institutions involved with LTCM “to seek the least disruptive solution that they believed was in their own collective self-interest.” The panel concluded,

The principal policy issue arising out of the events sur-

rounding the near collapse of LTCM is how to constrain excessive leverage. By increasing the chance that problems at one financial institution could be transmitted to other institutions, excessive leverage can increase the likelihood of a general breakdown in the functioning of financial markets.

In sum, the Fed came to the rescue of financial institutions that had been foolish or incompetent enough to do business with a highly leveraged hedge fund. Greenspan was among the report's coauthors.

How neutral is a public institution that admits it encourages private financial enterprises to craft public policy to their benefit?

During a congressional grilling, Greenspan insisted that the Fed had acted to prevent a financial meltdown. Rep. Ron Paul (R-TX), one of the few members of Congress who understands enough about monetary policy to question Fed claims, was having none of it. Representative Paul observed,

[O]ne place where I want to challenge you is the fact that in the type of system that we have, not everybody benefits equally . . . There are some who suffer where others benefit more. So, for instance, I see that we have today where the lower- or middle-income person who does not go on the dole has the toughest time.

Paul's point is valid, in light of the FOMC transcripts.

Americans have been conditioned to believe that monetary policy is too complex for them to understand. The conventional view is that fiscal policy, which deals with budgets and taxes, is easier to comprehend than monetary policy, which is concerned with control of the money supply and the credit necessary to achieve macroeconomic goals. But monetary policy was publicly debated in the 18th and 19th centuries—and well into the 20th. Thomas Jefferson and others adhering to a strict construction of the U.S. Constitution opposed the establishment of a central bank. Tennessean Andrew Jackson spoke about monetary policy more than any other president. He vetoed the Second Bank of the United States and repeatedly attacked central banking, terming it “the scourge of the people.” Jackson argued against currency debasement and supported hard money, signing the Specie Circular Act, which required payment in gold of all federal debt obligations. Grover Cleveland successfully defended the gold standard against populist attacks. In the 20th century, the actions taken by Franklin D. Roosevelt and Richard Nixon to reduce gold's role in the monetary order were hotly debated.

Citizens have good reason to be acutely interested in monetary policy, because it does not operate in a vacuum: It influences macroeconomic goals, including employment. American manufacturers and other private-industry sectors that produce real goods are affected by Fed policies that have caused or contributed to economic contractions.

Serious academics have been far less gullible than the popular media in analyzing Fed monetary errors. Allan H. Meltzer, in his 800-page *History of the Federal Reserve, Vol. I: 1913-51* (2003), argues that Fed errors contributed to the worst economic contractions of the period (1920-21, 1937-38), including the Great Depression (1929-33). This view is so widely accepted that the Fed even cooperated with Meltzer,

and Greenspan wrote the book's Introduction.

The Fed tolerates some dissent, but only within narrow parameters. Poole and Broadus have dissented privately at FOMC meetings. Other Fed officials have publicly questioned or criticized monetary policy. In 1969, during a vigorous debate between the New York and St. Louis banks, St. Louis Fed President Darryl R. Francis suggested that excessive growth of the money supply contributed to inflation. This idea, popularized by monetarist Milton Friedman, was once considered heresy among most economists. In 1979, Minneapolis Fed President Mark Willes admitted that “Nobody is very happy with the conduct of monetary policy.” Willes observed that “virtually every policy maker admits that, in hindsight, we have made some mistakes that have added to our economic woes.” Today, the Fed acknowledges on its website that “[T]he FOMC did not have great success in combating the increase in inflationary pressures that resulted from oil-price shocks and excessive money growth over the decade.”

American manufacturers and their workers have paid a steep price for the Fed's errors. Following World War II, employment in durable- and nondurable-goods manufacturing peaked in 1979, according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. It has declined in four subsequent business cycles. Meanwhile, employment in the financial-services and government sectors has grown since 1979. Greenspan has tried to define this industrial decline as a normal long-term process, telling Harvard's 1999 commencement audience that

The quintessential manifestations of America's industrial might earlier this century—large steel mills, auto assembly plants, petrochemical complexes, and skyscrapers—have been replaced by a gross domestic product that has been downsized as ideas have replaced physical bulk and effort as creators of value.

The Fed's role in this Schumpeterian process of “creative destruction” is absent from this explanation. The problem is not one man—Alan Greenspan or Benjamin Bernanke or any government economist to follow. The central bank itself, through its manipulation of interest rates, has contributed to this large-scale replacement of “physical bulk and effort” with “ideas.”

Since the central bank wields such considerable power and influence over the jobs and well-being of U.S. citizens, the Federal Reserve should be more transparent. “Openness is more than just useful in shaping better economic performance. Openness is an obligation of a central bank in a free and democratic society,” said Greenspan on October 21, 2001. “U.S. elected leaders chose to vest the responsibility for setting monetary policy in an independent entity, the Federal Reserve. Transparency of our activities is the means by which we make ourselves accountable to our fellow citizens to aid them in judging whether we are worthy of that task.”

The Fed could start by declassifying redacted FOMC transcripts, as other agencies do with the passage of time. It should also publish a more diverse range of views in its member-bank reviews, not only those of economists who agree with its decisions. Where, for example, are the articles by economists who argue that Fed policies have harmed the U.S. manufacturing sector? To publish such views would demonstrate humility and reassure the rest of us that the Fed and its chairman are aware they are not omniscient. 

Giving America Priority in Trade Policy

Freeing American Trade

by William R. Hawkins

As the global-trade establishment becomes more insulated from the growing criticism of people still rooted in their native soil, it is missing the turn in world events that is frustrating its efforts. Examples abound. The latest round of trade-liberalization negotiations has never managed more than a crawl since it was launched by the World Trade Organization in Doha, Qatar, in 2001. The initial attempt to launch a new round had failed in 1999. Doha had really broken down at the 2003 ministerial meeting in Cancun, Mexico. The 2005 Hong Kong ministerial meeting ended with nothing more than a press release asserting that the session had not failed. The thousands of bureaucrats, lawyers, politicians, and lobbyists who have enjoyed commercial diplomacy at five-star resorts cannot conceive of trade talks “failing.” Still, at the end of July, the Doha negotiations were “suspended” indefinitely.

Though economists and political philosophers have incessantly praised “free trade,” it is clear that the WTO talks have little to do with classical liberal thought. On July 1, European Agriculture Commissioner Mariann Fischer Boel said the deadlock was over how to cut domestic support to farmers. He particularly criticized Washington for refusing to revise its October 2005 offer to cut overall domestic support by 53 percent. Boel wanted the United States to make a cut of 70 to 75 percent, ostensibly to aid farmers in the Third World. The real objective, however, was to open the American market further so the Third World would dump its goods there rather than in Europe. Sen. Saxby Chambliss (R-GA), chairman of the Senate Agriculture Committee, objected, saying the United States should not “unilaterally disarm” in trade talks. Unfortunately, his admonition comes a couple of decades too late.

This is not the first attempt to undermine the security of the American farmer. The Federal Agricultural Improvement and Reform (FAIR) Act of 1996 contained “freedom to farm” provisions. The idea was that American farmers could increase their incomes more from exports than from farm-support programs. This approach failed. The stagnation of overseas markets and an increase in imports conspired to reduce the U.S. agricultural-trade surplus from \$31.7 billion in 1995 to \$7.6 billion in 2005. And during the first half of 2006, the United States ran a deficit in food and fiber trade.

The farm lobby has been much more successful in gaining relief than have manufacturers, who have lost 2.6 million jobs since 2001 with a trade deficit of \$695.8 billion in manufactured goods in 2005. Farmers have been content to watch their neighbors in industry face devastation as long as their own position was protected. Now, it is the farmer’s turn to be thrown to the foreign wolves.

William R. Hawkins is senior fellow at the U.S. Business and Industry Council.

Trade officials in the rest of the world understand that gains from commerce come from winning access to markets, not from some mysterious working of the “invisible hand.” Doha is explicitly committed to redistributing wealth from developed to underdeveloped countries—even those such as China and India, who are asserting themselves as rising, formidable powers.

Not surprisingly, Beijing finds the current world system well suited to its needs. Beijing’s State Information Center reports that Chinese exports have been growing by over 20 percent per year for five consecutive years. China has easy access to affluent foreign markets such as the United States, with minimal commitments to reciprocate. She runs a trade surplus and holds very large hard-currency reserves. There is nothing in the Doha round that Beijing needs, and it has successfully fended off any measures that would weaken its own development agenda.

According to the founding Doha declaration, developing countries will only have to make two thirds of the tariff cuts made by developed countries on manufactured products. Developed countries will not be able to put higher duties on high value-added products, which allows developing countries to move up the industrial ladder and challenge a wider range of output. At a July 12 meeting with WTO Director-General Pascal Lamy, India’s commerce minister Kamal Nath reiterated his country’s position that “adequate flexibilities” to protect India’s rural population and infant industries must be incorporated in any Doha agreement. In 2003, Lamy—then the E.U. trade commissioner—took credit for leading the coalition that caused the collapse of the Cancun talks.

The grand sophistry of free-trade theory is that unfettered commerce is a “win-win” situation. As Alexander Hamilton noted, however, “There are some who maintain that trade will regulate itself[, but] this is one of those speculative paradoxes . . . rejected by every man acquainted with commercial history.” This view has been confirmed by the work of two eminent scholars, economist William J. Baumol and mathematician Ralph E. Gomory, whose book *Global Trade and Conflicting National Interests* sent shock waves through the academic community. Baumol is a former president of the American Economics Association, and Gomory taught at Princeton. “We have shown that if a nation loses its share of world industries because its productivity lags or for any other reason, national income and the nation’s wage-earners are apt to be the ultimate victims,” they argue. “Free trade is not always and automatically benign.”

The hard facts are slowly beating down the soft appeal of free-trade theory. Alan Tonelson, my colleague at the U.S. Business and Industry Council, has compiled a database covering 112 industrial sectors, which traces how America is losing her share of high-valued-added industries. The largest losses have been within our home market, particularly industries crit-

ical to the fate of any modern industrialized economy: aircraft, aircraft parts (including engines), telecommunications equipment, pharmaceuticals, navigation and guidance instruments, machine tools, ball bearings, turbines for power plants, farm and construction equipment. Though the U.S. trade deficit made its seismic shift from a century of surpluses to perpetual deficits in the 1970's, the import wave surged in the wake of the 1997 world financial crisis.

The very narrow passage of the Central America Free Trade Agreement (CAFTA) by the U.S. House of Representatives last year casts doubt on the willingness of Congress to enact whatever might come from the Doha round. The battle over CAFTA revealed that free trade as an ideology can no longer command a majority in either political party. The Democrats split 188-15 against CAFTA, while the "party of business" could not muster more than 100 members on the record to support CAFTA a week before the vote. According to Majority Whip Roy Blunt (R-MO), the strongest argument for winning over reluctant GOP members was foreign policy—shifting the focus from free trade to helping cement democracy in Central America by building a trade bloc against China that could protect regional industry. The last few votes were won with promises of pork-barrel projects and even "protectionist" measures for firms in key House districts.

Free trade has never withstood the rigors of the real world. Historian Jaime Vicens Vives argues that the "opening of the internal market to foreign goods" led to the decline of Spain in the 17th century. Imports ran double exports and ruined the finances of the global superpower of the day. The bounty of the treasure fleets went to expand industry not in Spain, but in Spain's trading partners. Today, the United States is fast approaching that same trade-deficit ratio.

Writing from the Netherlands in 1765, James Boswell reported that "Most of their principal towns are sadly decayed. . . . Utrecht is remarkably ruined." The cause was competition from England and France, who were not afraid to use protectionism and subsidies to win the economic contest, while the Dutch clung to free trade and were driven from the field. The Dutch elite were merchants and bankers, middlemen in a service economy easily outflanked by those who actually produced things. So weak was the Dutch central authority that, according to Boston University professor Liah Greenfield, "they were not a nation." In her thought-provoking history *The Spirit of Capitalism*, she argues that "The sustained growth characteristic of a modern economy is not self-sustained; it is stimulated and sustained by nationalism."

In *The Rise and Fall of the Great Powers: Economic Change and Military Conflict 1500-2000*, historian Paul Kennedy cites several causes of England's decline from global leadership, including

a failure to invest sufficiently in new plant and laboratories, and in entire new industries; an inadequately trained work-force, and an insufficient supply of engineers and scientists as compared with foreign rivals; . . . a social culture which accorded far greater prestige to the professions and service industries (law, medicine, merchant banking, stockbroking) than to the business of building ships, turbines, machine tools and other manufactures.

All of these negative factors are evident in America today.

During the mid-19th century, classical-liberal ideas bloomed with the end of the Napoleonic Wars, which created the last great era of free trade. By the 1870's, however, the continental powers started to move away from such ideas to concentrate on their own national development. Tariffs were enacted across Europe by the mid-1890's, and national economic growth rates increased. The United States used protective tariffs as she was becoming the world's largest economy, peaking in the decade before World War I. America will now have to return to tariffs if she is to preserve her industrial base and bring her trade back into balance.

Article XII of the 1994 GATT-WTO agreement states that a country may, "in order to safeguard its external financial position and its balance of payments, . . . restrict the quantity or value of merchandise permitted to be imported." With the U.S. trade deficit pushing the current-account deficit to seven percent of GDP, the nation's international financial position has reached a danger level that could plunge the economy into a deep recession. Every responsible economist and policymaker knows that the current imbalance is unsustainable. In its May assessment of the U.S. economy, the International Monetary Fund concluded: "Delaying the inevitable multilateral adjustment will mean continued increases in U.S. external indebtedness, magnifying the potential for disruption to exchange rates, financial markets, and growth, both domestically and abroad." The IMF would like the United States to adjust to the "world" by raising domestic taxes rather than by resorting to "protectionism"—a reversal of priorities that does not favor American workers.

The WTO was founded to expand free trade, yet Article XII was actually strengthened by the accompanying GATT rules, which establish a preference for tariffs over quotas whenever a dangerous imbalance needs to be corrected. This attests to the legitimacy of tariffs as the traditional remedy for persistent trade problems, a use also endorsed by the lessons of history. Economists at Bard College's Levy Institute have calculated that a 25-percent tariff on all non-oil imports would cut the trade deficit in half (in terms of GDP) and generate enough new tax revenue to balance the federal budget.

Of course, it would be unwise to place a tariff on all imports, as there are some commodities and products that are not available from domestic sources. The goal should be to reverse foreign penetration rates in American industries. Tariffs would also provide a stimulus to foreign direct investment in new facilities. If the best way to reach the American market is to locate production within it, that is what foreign entrepreneurs will do—or they will leave the land of bounty to American entrepreneurs. The trade-equalization tariff would have to be higher than that proposed by the Levy Institute model if it is to bring the current account closer to balance, which would reduce the revenue effect as imports subject to the duties dried up. The enlargement of the domestic production base would generate new taxes in a true supply-side fashion.

The actual needs of the market are better met by tariffs than by the "market solution" of a substantial dollar devaluation, which would have an indiscriminate impact. A strong dollar that serves as the world's reserve currency is also a considerable strategic asset to the United States as the globe's preeminent power. It should not be gutted to balance trade; instead, trade should be balanced to preserve the dollar—and the financial system behind it. ◊

The Price of Globalism

Assessing the Fallout

by David A. Hartman

It is paradoxical that, having led the Western world to triumph over fascism and then communism, the United States is now the vanguard of yet another world socialist order. This American Empire, based on the benevolent neoconservative principles of borderless free enterprise, trade, and migration and consisting of multicultural social democracies enforced by U.S. military might and reinforced by U.N. policing, is becoming uncomfortably similar to the socialist “brotherhoods” our country once withstood. This American hubris will cause a destabilization of the present world order and will weaken our defense of worldwide freedom. And it portends an end to America’s already vanishing heritage of citizens’ rights to freedom, self-sufficiency, and republican government.

A look at the effects of our indiscriminating “free trade” policy—which does not require reciprocity from foreign competitors—on American manufacturers reveals the destructive nature of the neoconservatives’ global agenda. Pressured by the United States, the world’s developed nations reduced tariffs from the Depression levels that prevailed at the end of World War II, causing a widespread growth of international trade by the mid-1960’s. With the United States pushing them to eliminate tariffs altogether, the member nations of the European Common Market (now the European Union) lowered tariffs even more—then replaced them with border-adjusted value-added taxes (VATs), which provided the same protections against non-E.U. countries as the old tariffs but were reciprocally neutral within the European Union. Over the course of the next two decades, virtually every developed nation adopted either VATs or comparable levels of retail-sales taxes to replace tariffs—except for the United States, which kept reducing tariffs until they reached today’s negligible levels. The rest of the world had drawn the line, refusing to allow their domestic producers’ goods and services to be left unprotected.

What have been the consequences for U.S. manufacturers, whose products must compete with tax-subsidized foreign goods in our markets while facing double taxation in foreign markets? The price disadvantage has been catastrophic for the U.S. manufacturing sector, which has lost one half of its former share of U.S. Gross Domestic Product and now produces only two thirds of the goods Americans consume, resulting in an unsustainable annual trade deficit in goods of \$750 billion. Outsourcing adds to this burden. The business-services sector is now being outsourced, which threatens to make domestic competitors comparably uncompetitive. According to *BusinessWeek*, this outsourcing puts at risk 14 million jobs. Yet Washington has no plan in place to stop the bleeding.

Fear not! The neoconservatives are flooding the United States with immigrants to provide the cheap labor necessary to

restore American competitiveness. This policy is a slap in the face to American workers. Massive layoffs in U.S. manufacturing—over three million workers lost jobs between 1998 and 2003 alone—have already depressed hourly earnings, which have seen a meager seven-percent real increase (Consumer Price Index-adjusted for inflation) over the past four decades, despite a 250-percent increase in output per hour. Now, the relentless tide of immigrants, legal and illegal—over 1.3 million per year—will result, before the end of the decade, in the highest percentage of immigrants in the U.S. population ever recorded, if left unchecked. Despite a 132-percent increase in output per hour for the entire U.S. private sector, our foolish trade and immigration policies have kept the average real wages of hourly workers virtually the same since 1965.

One quarter of the new immigrants—those who come to the United States with college degrees—may well have made positive contributions to our economy, in composite, as citizens, without causing a depression of labor incomes. The same cannot be said for those who come without high-school diplomas—one third of all immigrants, and one half of those from Latin America—whose median incomes were, as of 2002, below \$20,000 and whose numbers substantially exceeded those of the native population in unemployment, welfare participation, and criminal behavior. Their presence has clearly had a negative effect on hourly wages and has increased the burden on the average American taxpayer.

In the private sector, the growth of real hourly compensation—which includes social-insurance taxes and fringe benefits—for both salaried and hourly wages does not look quite so depressed, but looks can be deceiving. Half of the increase in compensation since 1965 has been in social insurance taken from current workers and spent on retirees, and in fringe benefits, including medical insurance, the costs of which have been inflated far above CPI while providing less coverage. And even taking into account these dubious “increased benefits,” the overall earnings of U.S. private-sector workers, which had been a constant percentage of GDP for decades, has seen a 25-percent decline since 1965. Simply stated, government and the corporate owners of the New Corporate State have enlarged their share of the economic pie at the expense of all private employment—particularly hourly workers.

The decline in savings, accompanied by an increased growth of welfarism, among American workers further illustrates the destructive nature of the neocons’ globalist agenda. Personal savings have spiraled downward since the 60’s from five to six percent of income to negative savings (or indebtedness), despite substantial rates of saving among upper-income earners. Government, too, is spending in excess of income, so it follows that the owners of private enterprises collectively account for all of our economy’s saving—and, therefore, virtually all of the additional accumulation of wealth. Since a sizeable propor-

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tion of hourly workers require government assistance to make ends meet, these welfare transfer payments amount to government subsidies to employers who are paying substandard wages. Were Marx and Engels still alive, they would be thrilled to discover that neocon economic policies—which promote the redistribution of wealth, at an accelerating pace, to the “begabuck” class (billionaire multinationals whose government shills disperse alms to the needy); a shrinking bourgeoisie; and a growing proletariat (Charles Murray’s “underclass”)—are now dominant in the United States.

American workers in the private sector—especially those in manufacturing—and hourly workers in general have borne most of the cost of our neocon elites’ infatuation with globalism. Mid-sized manufacturers and specialized manufacturing services (which have been, by and large, family-owned businesses) have joined their workers as the principal losers, along with modest-sized cities and towns that had once turned to manufacturing to replace declining agricultural-sector employment. These communities have also seen the decline of their retail sectors as Wal-Mart and other big-box discount stores drove out local retailers and American-made goods with mass-merchandised cheap imports. Communities that were once the image of the American dream now have boarded-up Main Streets, and the best and brightest of their youth are fleeing to the big cities to seek better opportunities.

“One man’s ox gets gored; another has a feast.” Such is the mantra of the profiteers who benefit from globalism at the average American’s expense. Those feasting are the financial behemoths of Wall Street who control the mergers, acquisitions, and financing of the multinational corporations and the U.S. manufacturers who have relocated abroad. They also finance foreign trade and package the sale of U.S. assets and indebtedness that finances the federal and trade deficits in collaboration with their counterparts abroad—to the tune of over one trillion dollars each year.

Joining them at the table are the mass-discount retailers who manage the direct supply of low-priced imports from foreign producers and relocated U.S. producers, whose cheap products now dominate the American market. U.S. manufacturers relocated abroad are able to take advantage of their established distribution system, brand recognition, and patented or otherwise protected technology. They use closed factories or assemble foreign parts with a fraction of their former employees, serving as warehouses for foreign producers while remaining ostensibly American. Still others outsource the bulk of their production to foreign sources without new products ever touching a U.S. factory floor. (According to the U.S. Department of Commerce, in 2003, U.S. affiliates of foreign multinationals shipped \$150 billion in exports, which was 21 percent of the U.S. total. But they imported \$356 billion in goods, with the likely effect that more than two U.S. jobs have been lost for every job created. Meanwhile, U.S.-owned multinationals—formerly net exporters—are now net importers, to a difference of \$137 billion per year, with nearly as large a probable loss of U.S. jobs. Together, the foreign multinationals and the flip-flop of U.S. multinationals accounted for 85 percent of the increased U.S. trade deficit from 1994 to 2003.) Most reap huge profits at the expense of their struggling or eliminated U.S. competitors. Business services are seeing a similar outsourcing trend. Meanwhile, bureaucrats, professionals, and academics, who form a sizeable and influential interest group

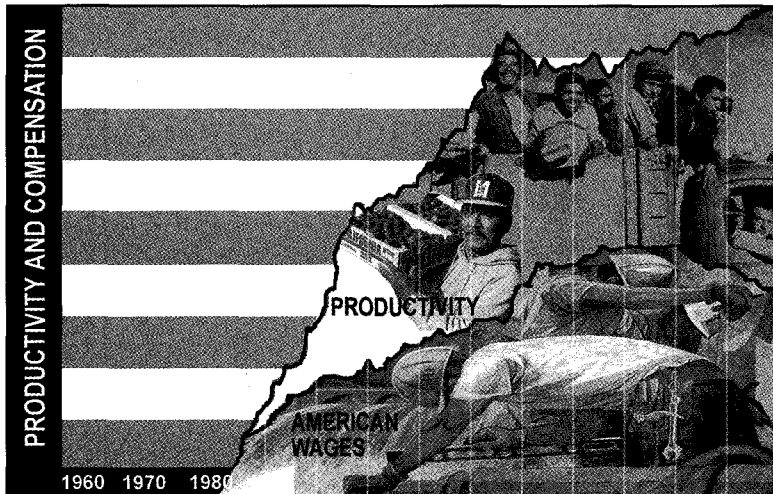
with secure domestic employment, have found this globalism provides them a bountiful supply of cheap consumer goods and personal services, which only guarantees their loyalty to the globalist regime.

Also at the table are the globalist camp followers. The U.S. Department of Commerce, the media, the public-policy institutes, the economist gurus and academics—all continually preach the “good news” that all is well, ignoring the crisis of the U.S. manufacturing sector, growing deficits and indebtedness, and the maldistribution of income and wealth, as well as the declining social indicators. Self-declared “supply-side” economists have unjustifiably supported globalist policies: “Free trade maximizes national economic growth”—even if the trade is not reciprocal? “Deficits don’t matter”—despite size, duration, and accumulated debt? “Open borders benefit everyone”—despite lost jobs and lower pay for native workers, together with social disruption? Unfortunately, history does not support these utopian maxims.

The United States is on a collision course with reality, but a change of direction is still possible. Voters never sent a single representative to Washington to write a tax code that prevents reciprocal terms of trade and hinders manufacturers from staying competitive and paying civilized wages to their employees.

The neocon remedies for these problems are like the leeches used to treat the sick in the days of yore. Devaluation of the dollar (read: printing more dollars), they claim, will balance the trade deficit. However, commodities and physical or intellectual capital are very mobile and have world prices whose inflation is inversely proportional to devaluation; and government will inflate itself as necessary, leaving only labor to devalue its share of income, as the past four decades of increasing U.S. trade deficits and intermittent devaluations have shown.

The social consequences of these globalist policies are clearly contributing to the deterioration of our social fabric. Middle-class marriage and birth rates continue to decline as American workers seek to maintain the comforts and lifestyle that their parents enjoyed. The underclass forsakes marriage and bears illegitimate children who become wards of the state. Such children are often underachievers in school and prone to substance abuse and criminality, conditions that perpetuate an intergenerational underclass. Senior citizens join the



underclass as dependents of the state. If these trends continue, the United States will no longer be defined socially by a middle-class majority of citizens.

Neocon-driven U.S. military interventions abroad only add to the burden. The futility increasingly evident in the American Empire's foreign policy has seriously undermined its world image among both hostile nations and erstwhile allies. At some point, our financial excesses, the deterioration of our manufacturing sector (which has traditionally produced superior weaponry), and our overall inability to project power abroad will provoke the emergence of more powerful and vigorous nations that will replace a nation that no longer leads by example, nor remembers how it achieved the hegemony that it squandered. And it will prove increasingly difficult to ship

volunteers overseas to fight interventionist wars who have little or no stake in the ventures of their overlords.

The United States is on a collision course with reality, but a change of direction is still possible. The average American never sanctioned most of the policies that are now driving us to demise. The electorate never sent a single representative to Washington to write a tax code that prevents reciprocal terms of trade and hinders manufacturers from staying competitive and paying civilized wages to their employees. A replacement of income taxes with border-adjusted consumption taxes, such as a VAT or a national sales tax, would reinstate competitive prices and the saving for investment necessary to close the trade deficit and eliminate the federal deficit.

Voters have never sent anyone to the Congress on a mission to flood the country with unskilled, illiterate Third World immigrants who will drive down middle-class wages and fill the welfare rolls. Nor has the American electorate at any time in the post-World War II era asked a president to invade any country that did not represent a clear and present threat to the United States or any of her principal allies.

What Americans want is a government that taxes them equitably and spends their money frugally. They want protection—military, economic, and communal—not an American Empire that endlessly intervenes abroad while allowing illegal immigrants to stream across our borders, maintains uncompetitive terms of trade, and fosters excessive welfare burdens.

In short, Americans do not want globalism; they want a return to the traditional America that once was the envy of the world. A revolution at the polls—sending neocons, socialists, and multiculturalists back to wherever they came from and replacing them in Washington with real Americans—is long overdue. <>

What Are Border-Adjusted Value-Added Taxes?

by Scott P. Richert

(Editors' note: David Hartman's various articles discussing the role that a border-adjusted value-added tax could play in saving American manufacturing have prompted some of our readers to ask for a brief explanation, in layman's terms, of how such a tax would work.)

Like the sales tax, a value-added tax is a tax on consumption. Unlike the sales tax, the VAT is an indirect tax, which means that the tax is collected from the seller rather than the consumer, even though the consumer ultimately foots the bill.

The VAT is a relatively new form of taxation, developed in France in 1954. Since then, it has spread throughout the world, and every major industrialized country, with the exception of the United States, imposes a VAT. Indeed, the European Union requires member states to take part in a common VAT system, with a base rate of 15 percent. (Individual states can apply higher VATs, but the maximum VAT that the E.U. allows is 25 percent.)

In the United States, the VAT has often been viewed with suspicion, because it was sometimes imposed in Europe not as a replacement for another tax but as an additional tax. Thus, many regarded it as a tax that enabled the growth of socialism in Europe. A VAT, however, is

just a form of taxation, no more or less likely than any other to increase the size and scope of government. In fact, if a VAT is imposed as a replacement for another tax (as David Hartman has proposed), it might actually reduce the size and scope of government.

With the general reduction of tariffs since the early 1970's, every major country except the United States has used the VAT, at least in part, as a replacement for tariffs. This is where "border-adjustability" comes in. When a French manufacturer sells a product inside of France, the French VAT is applied. When that same manufacturer exports that same product to the United States, the VAT is rebated, allowing the French manufacturer to sell his product at a lower price in America.

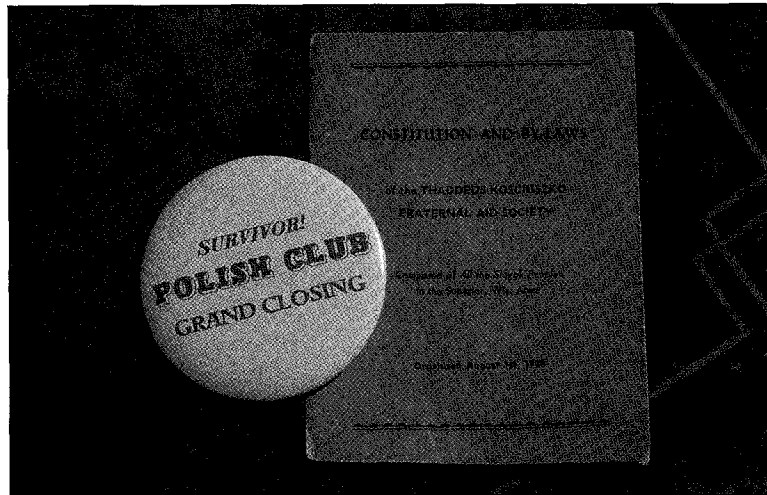
However, when an American manufacturer exports a product to France, the VAT is applied to the product. The American product increases in cost by 19.6 percent (France's standard VAT) just by crossing the border.

In effect, by lowering tariffs and not replacing them with a VAT, the United States has transformed herself into an ideal market for imports, which have an advantage when competing with domestic products that American-made products do not have in countries that impose VATs.

A Bowl of Stew

A Story

by Anthony Bukoski



Aaron D. Wolf

I can't forget the sorrow of my lodge brothers when the doors closed to our beloved home. We had to pay a bill for a new roof, then the ice machine in the bar went on us. When the jukebox broke, we couldn't play "Poland Shall Not Perish While We Live to Love Her." Neighbors around 1901 Broadway won't hear the anthem come again through the windows of the Tad. Kosciuszko Lodge and Polish Club, founded 1928.

March, march, Dąbrowski
From Italia's fair shores,
Back to join the nation,
Back to Poland's broad plains.

With all of us tired and sick, we couldn't drive or walk no more to meetings or to the Polish Club bar for a shot and a beer. I am one of the young members. Wojciechowski is fifty-four, seven years younger than me. Lisak is younger. For the rest of them in the Club, they complain, and rightfully. They say, "*Starość nieradość*, Old age is no good." They stay at home behind locked doors. No new members, no new dues to pay the light and heat bill.

At the bitter end, Miernickis made up half of the Polish Club. If you had eighteen lodge members present for a meeting, nine were from their family. Now, with the Club out of business, they should organize a Miernicki Fraternal for themselves. They could say, "If that's what you want, you non-Miernickis can have your own auxiliary." At every meeting almost, they won the twenty-four-dollar dues board, the eighteen-dollar attendance prize. Money goes to money. That one, Paul Miernicki, age seventy-seven, cried out, "*Jezu kochanej!*" when we closed the doors of the Club. We told him, "Things will get

better, Paul Miernicki." We said to him, "*Śmiech to zdrowie, a zdrowie to grunt* . . . Laughter is good health, and good health is all." Nothing comforted him.

I say, "Laughter is good health," when, in damp weather, my fingers are sore. My hands are swollen so bad that it's hard to play. I practice for my wife, your mother, Tadeusz and Karen. In the kitchen, your mother and I sit at the table, look at your empty places, and feel lost. You are grown-ups, but she puts out an empty bowl for your soup, whether *kapusniak*, beet, or mushroom soup. Someday, you will be with us when you have a vacation from work.

As I practice my old songs after supper, she does the dishes. Tonight, we had *bigos*, hunter's stew. It smells like meat and cabbage in here. Laughing, I tell her that with my *schottisches*, I am repaying her for the fine supper. (I tell you privately, it is not always much fun for me. Yesterday, I felt crippled enough in my arms and wrists that she had to get the accordion out of the case for me and help me with the straps. I played "Dreamer's Waltz.") I have good news to report, too, though—not just that everything is bad at the Kosciuszko Club and that my hands are sore at the house.

Actually, I have three good-news things to tell you. The South Superior Market expanded the meat case. Your mother and I waited for this. Final remodeling is done. You should see in today's paper, it says the market has added "36 ft. to give us 66 ft. total, making us the largest full-service meat department in the Northland." That market is "Home to Award Winning Sausage." On top of the counter are three Wisconsin Association of Meat Producers plaques. In the "Smoked and/or Cured Small Diameter Sausage" class, the market won a Champion's Award for their apple bratwurst. I'll try to send the ad. We were first in line today. She wanted good meat, and, in the produce case, we spotted a head of cabbage. They have expanded the produce service as well.

Anthony Bukoski is the author, most recently, of *Time Between Trains*.

In *bigos*, you use beef, pork, white cabbage, salt, butter, onions, an apple or two, *etc.* (Remember how your ma sometimes substituted sauerkraut?)

Other good news is that the church at Belknap Street and Hammond Avenue across from the courthouse reopened. Presbyterians held it for years until it shut down like the Polish Club. "Enter HIS Courts With Praise" is carved in the stone over the front door. Who prays in a locked building where everything sacred has been moved out of? Now, it is a Hall of Fame. The words in stone remain. However, today God's Courts are filled with concertinas, accordions, sheet music for both, a work area to teach how to repair accordions, and a place where famous musicians come to perform—Myron Floren next month. A woman named Helmi owns the Hall of Fame.

Here is other good news, my son and daughter. Your mother will be on local television on the Channel Eight cooking show out of Duluth. Next week's program, *Hi Is for Hot Dish*, features Mrs. Agnes Cieslicki making Baked Noodle Ring. I like it served with hash. We'll get her a new dress and a trip to the beauty parlor. She's excited about starring on Channel Eight, as you can imagine. I will drive her over and wait in the TV studio.

Now that I have told you the good, I must notify you of the hydraulics plant cutting back. Your cousin worked in its shop. It was tough for him. We held a benefit supper for Dave at the Club. Your ma and the ladies cooked in the kitchen there. Other women brought bread, cakes, radishes, celery. Dave's poor health was blamed on the plant. For twenty years, he breathed in the paint fumes. The doctor could do nothing. Your Aunt Cecilia is heartbroken, which is why I write to you in the Big Apple New York and to you, Karen, in Los Angeles, California, to tell you about Ceil Simzek. Here are the tears your mother cried for her sister. —>

More sad news. We have heard of a closing at work, but before I tell you about it, both of you remember: "Laughter is good health." That is what I do: laugh! I laugh as I sit at the table. I roar as I wait for a phone call, hand too sore to hold the pen I am writing you with. I remember that your mother and I bought you bongo drums when you were in tenth grade, Tadeusz. It makes us happy to think your sister already played the piano. We thought you needed musical training. The bongos lay on the kitchen table for your birthday. These would appeal to you, we thought, but you didn't like them. You thought you would play the easy way, just tap your index fingers on the drums. The instruction pamphlet said, No, not that way. The proper way to play the instrument was to use the side of the thumb and the little finger of one hand. You'd have to practice to get your wrists loose to play the correct way, so you quit.

Remember when you were watching a rerun of *I've Got A Secret* when I practiced in the kitchen?

"Bring in your new drums," I said.

"I want to hear what the secret is," you said.

I ran my fingers down the keys. "Bring in the bongos."

"For what, Pa?"

You started to close the living-room door on me in the kitchen. I heard Garry Moore, the TV-show star, say, "Enter and sign in, please."

"Don't shut that door."

"I can't hear the secrets then, Pa."

"No. At all costs, don't shut the door."

With me playing "Hoopi Shoopi," I know it was hard for you hearing the TV. I didn't want you to turn it up. That would disturb my practice. I was in my undershirt. I sat at the table I write from now. Accordion to my chest, fingers running over the buttons and keys, I nodded when you came in from the living room to say the show was over. Your mother and you didn't hear a single secret. "What now?" you said.

"Play a polka with me."

"I don't know how. You just got me the drums."

"Play. Keep the beat up. Ready? One, two, three."

Tadeusz, beloved son, you looked uncomfortable sitting across the table, drums between your knees. You tapped away. I wanted you to stay with me on "Baby Doll Polka."

"Play one more song with me," I said.

"No more," you said. "I can't take it."

Over the years, I've tried explaining to you and your sister why I wanted the door left open while I played the accordion. You might have thought it was for air circulation between the rooms, but I didn't want us—not you, Karen, your friends when they came over—separated by having the door closed on me like that. Those were songs I had played for my dear father. I tried to connect you and Karen to your mother, to your grandfather, to the old country and me, but you were teenagers. How could you connect to anything? "Come hear my songs," I said.

Karen and you would give no reason for your actions when you left with your friends while I remained at the table practicing the music I cannot allow myself to forget. This is what the accordion means to me, the Scandalli Imperio VII model I had shipped twenty years ago by Greyhound from Chicago to Superior. I have gone to many nursing homes since then. I've entertained at Chaffey, St. Francis, Southdale, Beverly Manor. An hour of my music costs the rest homes nothing. I am in great demand and have received letters of appreciation from important social directors. Nobody but your ma, the social directors, and the people in their wheelchairs appreciate what I do.

At the hardboard plant, we have made pressed wood for auto-dashboard trim and for other parts of an auto interior. Ford has shipped our work to Mexico. This is what the accordion and a career of laboring at a hardboard plant have meant to me: I cannot go on without them. The owner of the Hall of Fame told me the white accordion keys are yellow from years of my playing. With acid she can get the keys clean of the discoloration caused by the fingertips. If I throw in the sheet music (most bought from Vitak-Elsnic Publishing Company, Chicago), she will give me three hundred for the accordion. By the way, the Allouez ore dock in Superior could be hurt when Ford closes its St. Paul plant. At the dock, they ship taconite to steel mills on the lower lakes.

Beaten down by such news all the time, but smiling and laughing with your ma, I say, "Agnes, if she calls tonight from the Hall of Fame in the old Presbyterian, I will sell it to her. If no call, I hang on to the accordion forever. Job or no job, I don't want to let go of it."

Seven-thirty in the evening has passed. No call from the Hall of Fame. Helmi, the owner, is an ethnomusicologist. "What's an ethnomusicologist, Helmi?" I asked when I brought the accordion in to see what she would pay me for it. I still don't understand what is an ethnomusicologist. You and Karen, do you know? Am I, your father, an ethnomusicologist? Helmi has other Vitak-Elsnic sheet music. She has Johnny Picon and

Frankie Yankovic records in the Hall of Fame.

Tonight's cooking show was *D Is for Dessert* not *C Is for Crockpot*. I am wrong about the programs. I gave my heart to this accordion and to the job they've shipped out of Superior. Next week is your ma's starring role. "Agnes Cieslicki's Baked Noodle Ring."

"Next Thursday. Get ready, Agnes," I remind her. *H Is for Hot Dish*."

"I don't want you to sell the accordion," she says. "Why don't you think about it and have a bowl of stew before bed?"

"Are you crying?" I ask her. "I'm sure no one will call."

My fingers are sore by this hour of nine o'clock. They are sore as I run my fingertips through her beautiful hair to comfort her. I write this letter as Ma and I talk in the kitchen. She is drying her tears. Tonight's paper carries other news, "Superior's Koppers to close for good."

Koppers Inc. has announced it will permanently close a plant that treats railroad ties with creosote. The facility employed 23 people last winter. Although its ownership had changed over the years, the creosote plant had been in continuous operation since 1928.

(Tadeusz, that is the year the Polish Club began.) Hardboard plant. Creosote plant. Ore dock.

"There is time for *bigos*," your mother says. "It will be a celebration. No phone call yet."

"Okay, I'll eat," I say. "Do you feel better about things?"

"For a minute, but there is so much to think about with the hardboard plant, the kids so far off there, and you maybe selling the accordion."

Son Tadeusz, when Helmi doesn't call me, I laugh out loud and startle your mother. At the stove, she warms my stew. She looks tired. She wears the housedress you sent for her birthday. No wonder she is worn out, with the TV show coming up next week and everything else. Except for the arthritis, I myself feel pretty good. My accordion case is open on the couch in the living room. There lies the Scandalli Imperio VII. No one will phone me at this late hour.

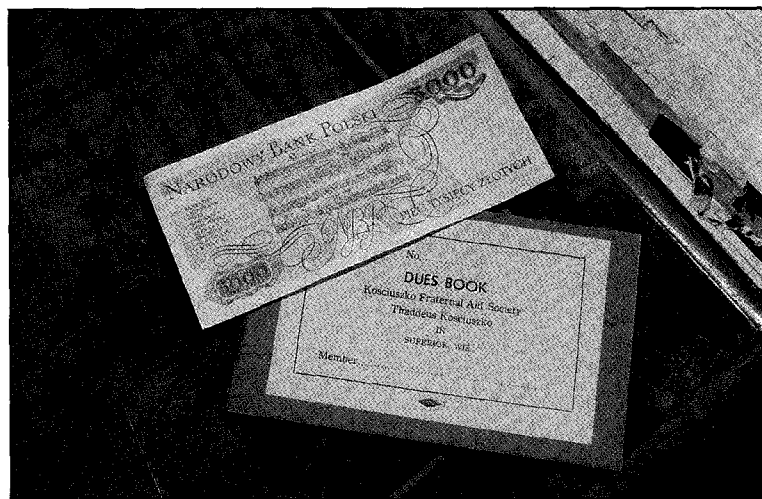
Your mother's *Treasured Polish Recipes* says that, in the old country, *bigos* is served at every hunting party. The book says a famous writer, Mickiewicz, wrote, "There has been a bear hunt. The bear is killed; a great fire is made. While the *bigos* is warming in a mighty pot, the hungry hunters drink crystal clear, gold-flecked wodka from Gdansk." What they did once serves no purpose in Superior.

We have to count more on tourism for our economy, Tadeusz. We have in this city the Old Firehouse and Police Museum, the S.S. Meteor Maritime Museum, and the Accordion Hall of Fame, which the phone book says is called "A World of Accordions Museum." The museum "houses a unique collection of accordions, concertinas, button boxes and other accordion-family instruments. There is also a library and a gift shop." Who is going to visit such tourist attractions? Downtown is a mess. You have to be careful the bricks don't fall on your head when you walk past the Palace Theater and Ansello's American Grill, but no one is calling about the Scandalli Imperio VII.

"This *bigos* is excellent," I tell your mother in order to pick up her spirits. Then I say, "Let the phone ring. After nine-thirty is too late for anyone to call here."

I do not know what is wrong with her. She can never let a telephone ring without answering it. Here is the worst news. I will say it again: I have lost my job at the hardboard plant.

I think I will play our Polish National Anthem, "*Jeszcze Polska Nie Zginęła* . . . Oh, Our Poland Shall Not Perish While We Live to Love Her." I will play for both of you so far away on one side of the country or another. I will play it right through the ringing of the telephone. I have said to your mother: "Open all of the doors inside this house, Agnes. Let no door separate me from my house and the house from its music. When you've done this, opened all the doors, then I will laugh and play '*Jeszcze Polska*' with all my strength."



Aaron D. Wolf

She opens the storage room in the basement. She opens the doors to the bathroom, living room, and closets up here. She opens the bedroom doors upstairs where we have the second telephone. The phone is ringing. No doors are now closed. Nothing separates the old house from the anthem I play, "Oh, Our Poland Shall Not Perish . . ." "No, don't answer it," I tell her when she is washing the bowl I've used and the phone rings once more.

"No," I would like to tell the companies that send their business elsewhere and hurt Superior. "No," I would like to say when companies close plants and put us out of work here. "No," I would like to say to the company that killed Dave Simzek. Instead, I laugh and sing,

Marsz, marsz, Dąbrowski

Z ziemi włoskiej do polskiej

I'll get a severance package from the hardboard plant. Eleven weeks of pay won't be enough. It will kill your mother and me. And you, Tadeusz, don't hold it against me. I'd never consider selling the accordion if we didn't have to worry about things now. I have played the anthem loud so that every room could hear. If we ever sell this house, the Polish anthem will remain in the rooms and closets of every floor.

"Are you crying?" your mother asks when, unable to let it ring, she picks up the telephone.

"Yes," I say. "I might never play the song again."

"But it is not Helmi, only your daughter calling from California," she says. "She is coming on vacation for a week and asks that I make her *bigos* and that you play 'Hoopee Shoopee' for her." 

A New Path to Peace

The Damascus Road

by George Aijjan

Israel's recent siege of Lebanon, which has imposed a crippling humanitarian, economic, and psychological setback on her northern neighbor, may return Syria to the center stage of Middle Eastern politics. Considering Syria's enduring influence over Lebanon and the Palestinians and her close ties to Iran, ignoring Syria no longer serves America's (or Israel's) interests.

Even before the recent escalation of hostilities in the region, President George W. Bush's advisors, mindful of his legacy, should have calculated the value of engaging Syria, given the realignment of Syrian and Palestinian objectives that resulted from Hamas's recent electoral victory and Syria's continued ability to loom large over Lebanese politics despite a hasty military withdrawal following the assassination of former Prime Minister Rafik Hariri.

When Lebanon held elections shortly after Hariri's death, Hezbollah demonstrated its formidable political power by scoring more seats in the Lebanese parliament and the Beirut cabinet than ever before—an obvious windfall for Syria. In addition, Maronite politician Michel Aoun, enormously popular among Lebanon's sizable Christian minority, behaved capriciously. As Syria's fiercest opponent when he headed Lebanon's army, Aoun had even declared war on Damascus toward the end of the Lebanese civil war. As Lebanon's first post-occupation elections approached, however, Aoun left Syria off the table and reserved his ire for Hariri's allies. Consequently, his "Omega" coalition, which triumphed in Lebanon's most Christian region, actually included pro-Syria parties. Once the new parliament convened, Aoun entered into a political alliance with Hezbollah—another boon for Syria.

That Hezbollah did not fail to influence the Lebanese elections is no surprise. In the weeks leading up to the elections, American policymakers overestimated the influence of the anti-Syria camp, especially MP Saad Hariri, the politically inept son of the slain Rafik who, fearing his father's fate, remained outside of the country.

Hamas's January electoral victory in Palestine significantly reshaped Palestinian-Syrian relations, which should also have led President Bush to reconsider rapprochement with Damascus. Syria's rapport with the new Hamas majority was a departure from the *status quo*, since, in previous years, Syrian and Palestinian leaders have been at odds. The Syrian government, led for decades by the micromanaging Ba'athist dictator Hafez Assad, had consistently horrible relations with Yasser Arafat's Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO). These grudges most aggressively manifested as an ugly sideshow during the Lebanese civil war, but Assad's retaliation continued in

the 1990's through his support of the "rejectionist" Palestinian groups based in Damascus, Islamic Jihad and Hamas. These rivals of Arafat undermined the PLO's peacemaking credibility by launching suicide bombings at inopportune times, which also served to remind the United States that she could not ignore Syria's stake in the peace process. For a similar purpose, Syria steadfastly supported Hezbollah's activities, serving as a logistical conduit for the transfer of Iranian weaponry to strongholds in southern and eastern Lebanon, enabling Hezbollah to claim victory for Israel's withdrawal in 2000.

When Hafez Assad died that same year, his mantle passed to his 34-year-old son, Bashar, who proceeded with similar affinity for Hezbollah and hostility toward the PLO. For example, during the 2002 Arab Summit in Beirut, Assad's trusty disciple Emile Lahoud, the loyal-to-a-fault Lebanese president, obnoxiously prohibited Arafat from addressing the conference *via* satellite from his Israeli-mandated confinement in Ramallah.

Early in his first term, President Bush attempted to cooperate with Syria—not to pursue the peace process, but to drive Iraq further into isolation. He also overlooked Syria's increasingly unnecessary military presence in Lebanon and tolerated her support of Hezbollah, even allowing Secretary of State Colin Powell to snub the Lebanese opposition guru, Maronite Patriarch Nasrallah Sfeir, when he visited Washington in March 2001.

After September 11, however, circumstances changed dramatically, and President Bush found himself increasingly surrounded by policymakers who saw evil in all things Ba'ath. Syria became a poster child for terrorism, especially in the rhetoric of the President's neoconservative advisors. Assad's strident opposition to the Iraq war and hostile practice of facilitating the insurgency—with Syria serving as a transit point—plunged U.S.-Syria relations deeper into disarray; in 2003, Congress passed the Syria Accountability and Lebanon Sovereignty Act, which included economic sanctions.

The relationship did not hit bottom, however, until the assassination of Hariri on February 14, 2005, for which Washington quickly blamed the Syrian regime. Margaret Scobey, the U.S. ambassador to Syria, was officially recalled and has never returned to Damascus. The list of Syrian crimes now included murdering Hariri and his entourage, abetting the Iraq insurgency, hosting the "rejectionist" Palestinian groups, and supporting Hezbollah.

The first issue was the freshest, most dramatic, and easiest to sell diplomatically, and it even afforded President Bush and French President Jacques Chirac the opportunity to kiss and make up—at Syria's expense. The second issue mattered the most to the American public, with the dubious claim that "Saddam's WMDs were moved to Syria" still ringing in their ears. But the Hamas/Hezbollah factor became an ideological

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sticking point for the administration, increasing its already ardent desire to humiliate the Syrian regime.

Assad, in turn, played the antagonist *par excellence*. In addition to strengthening ties to Iran, he capped off his defiance with a September 10, 2005, televised press conference during which he flaunted his close ties to Hamas politburo chief Khaled Meshaal and other Damascus-based detractors. At a time when Washington was rolling out the red carpet for PLO leader Abu Mazen, the Syrian regime seemed determined to undermine those efforts, much to the fury of White House officials.

In retrospect, the Bush administration's actions suggested neither a valid assessment of Arab public opinion nor the establishment of robust contingency plans for the pending Palestinian election. Instead, Bush continued to pout, the Palestinians voted, and White House protégé Abu Mazen lost his legitimacy almost overnight, to the benefit of Hamas. Basically, Bashar Assad completely outmaneuvered Bush. For all the juvenile blunders he and his obtuse cronies committed in Lebanon, Assad, strategically speaking, more than compensated by reading Meshaal's coffee cup like a seasoned pro.

The Hamas victory truly broke new ground, because the Syrian and Palestinian regimes represent separate tracks of the peace process with a far more cohesive agenda than at any time in recent memory. President Bush needs to accept this new reality and acknowledge Syria's significant influence over both Lebanon and Palestine. Despite the lack of any connection to Hamas, and the scant hope of establishing one organically, America already has a relationship with Syria, strained though it may be. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice grudgingly admitted as much during a recent trip to the region.

There is also a track record of nearly completed peace negotiations between Israel and Syria that could be resurrected in order to make a deal that saves face for everyone involved. However, President Bush—and whatever discredited neoconservatives he still enlists—may be unable to take that ideological step. They hate the Syrian regime with a passion, and they unjustly project this bias onto the Syrian people, falsely assuming that Bashar Assad is weak and unpopular. Consequently, the Bush administration does not wish to legitimize the Syrian regime by engaging it in negotiations. This irrational fixation is ultimately detrimental to U.S. interests, because, diplomatically speaking, Syria is the only reliable access point to both Hezbollah and Hamas.

To reignite the peace process, the United States could discourage Israel's unilateral disengagement policy, favored by former Prime Minister Ariel Sharon, and pursue the Palestinian, Syrian, and Lebanese tracks together. Assad could be offered concessions in exchange for helping tame the behavior of Hamas and brokering an arrangement in Lebanon whereby Hezbollah would have to disarm. If the Syrians furnished Meshaal and other protégés with a crash course in peaceful diplomacy, thereby achieving a more moderate positioning from Hamas, and successfully facilitated Hezbollah's disarmament—and Israel responded positively—President Bush might succeed in hammering out a comprehensive deal before leaving office. That deal would include a fully sovereign Palestinian state as well as a Lebanese political solution, which would update the 1989 Taif Accords and likely offer the Shiites—Lebanon's largest sect—an expanded role to compensate for Hezbollah's disarmament. A reasonable timetable would

run well into the first term of President Bush's successor, however, which would make it difficult for him to establish the peace deal as part of his legacy.

The alternative is an intensely risky and divisive strategy, but, given the current state of unrest in the region, the timing is right for Bush to implement it. In this scenario, the United States would cut Hezbollah's supply lines and weaken Hamas by isolating it from Syria. Such a tactic would simplify the Palestinian equation, assuming that Israel would continue with a unilateral disengagement policy in the West Bank, while the United States would shepherd the less cumbersome, more easily implemented Syrian and Lebanese tracks. Presumably, Syria would be lavishly rewarded, most likely with the entire Golan Heights, in exchange for delivering on a lengthy list of tough concessions, which would include facilitating Hezbollah's disarmament. Syria would have to cease all support for Hamas and the other "rejectionist" Palestinian groups, who would be permanently expelled from Syria back to the West Bank and thereby deprived of their impunity and subject to retaliation by Israel. Syria would have to recognize the state of Israel and normalize ties, including full diplomatic exchange. She would have to minimize her ties with Iran and express her disapproval of Iran's nuclear ambitions. She would have to cooperate with American goals in Iraq, including, but not limited to, border control. She would have to grant full citizenship to some 420,000 Palestinian refugees currently living in Syria. She would have to compensate Syrian Jewish families who lost homes, businesses, or lands during reprisals following the 1948, 1967, and 1973 wars. And she would have to acknowledge Lebanon's sovereignty and establish an embassy in Beirut.

Diplomatically speaking, Damascus is
the only reliable access point to both
Hezbollah and Hamas.

We can only speculate about the disposition of the Israeli public toward such a proposal. Their wartime psyche might reject the concept out of frustration and mistrust of Arabs in general. Alternatively, the tenacity of Hezbollah fighters and their consequent emboldening impact on provocative, militant elements in the Islamic world might convince Israelis that a conclusive "land for peace" deal is in their long-term interest. While the Israeli military can inflict major damage on Lebanon and certainly wage similar air strikes on Syria with relative impunity, its leaders know that this strategy is not sustainable. Unless Israel occupies every square inch of land from which missiles could be launched, the possibility remains for isolated rocket barrages to send tens of thousands of her citizens into bomb shelters.

Only one force has demonstrated the capability to stop such activities: the military and intelligence services of the countries from which these attacks could be launched. The only way that Israel will be safe in the long term is for these tightly controlled Arab state institutions to deal with internal rogue elements themselves. Essentially, Israelis need the infamous Syrian

moukhabarat to work to disrupt terrorists instead of facilitating them. They would have to conclude that this outsourcing of crackdowns against militants, which has already been done with Egypt and Jordan, would ultimately increase Israel's security. Of course, the price for the Syrian and Lebanese governments to switch sides and comply would be "land for peace" treaties that allow those governments to recover some of their dignity.

The Syrian regime, however, might not be willing or even able to make so many concessions. Backpedaling on resistance to Israel, including cutting support to Hamas and Hezbollah, could prove insurmountable. And, if such a peace deal were successfully brokered, Syria would no longer have an ominous external threat as her main focus and would have to shift her attention to internal economic issues, especially tackling corruption, which Assad has not yet shown sufficient motivation to confront. Furthermore, the Ba'ath Party would find little justification for maintaining the draconian Emergency Laws that have curtailed political activity since 1963, or for continuing Syria's constitutional mandate of an essentially one-party system.

This plan would test the political savvy of Bashar Assad. To explain to the Syrian people that he has eschewed Ba'athist rhetoric about a comprehensive solution to the Arab-Israeli conflict would certainly damage his cherished reputation as a staunch defender of Arabism.

Still, it is difficult to overstate the importance of the Syrian Arab Republic regaining its territory in full. Assad's presumed ability to restore Syria's sense of national dignity would enshrine him, and his father by extension, as Arab heroes on par with few others, assuring goodwill from the Syrian people for

years to come. He will also have validated secular nationalism and dealt a crushing blow to his only credible opponents, the Muslim Brotherhood, having completely stolen their thunder. When free elections would finally be held, what argument could the radical Muslims possibly make to suggest their superior ability to rule Syria when their rivals, the secular incumbents, have delivered such a striking victory?

Certainly, the defeat of Syrian Islamists would forcefully curtail a worrisome regional trend. But America would reap other vital rewards from an Israel-Syria peace deal. Most importantly, agreement on the concept of "land for peace" on Israel's northern borders with Syria and Lebanon would be accompanied by Hezbollah's disarmament, thereby ending its role as an Iranian military proxy. If President Bush could steer this deal to completion and offer a sufficiently attractive package to pry Syria away from Iran, he would deliver a tremendous blow to Tehran's imperial ambitions by essentially depriving Iran of valuable allies in Syria and Lebanon.

Responding to such a proposal would no doubt be the biggest and toughest decision Bashar Assad has faced. He has already navigated a few considerable challenges, and, despite some foolish rookie mistakes, his regime remains solidly in control of Syria, while his naive opposition is barely functioning. This would be his first true test as a leader and would define his legacy. During his six years as Syrian president, did he tighten relations with Hamas and Hezbollah because of some ideological commitment? Or did he astutely surmise their rising fortunes and merely ride their coattails to a stronger bargaining position with the United States and Israel? The answers are unclear, but it is worth the risk to discover them.

The Morality of Everyday Life: Rediscovering an Ancient Alternative to the Liberal Tradition by Thomas Fleming

What passes for conservatism today is really nothing more than the impossible moral and social theories of the Renaissance and Enlightenment, in which universal abstractions, such as democracy and equality, are presented as hard truths, when, in fact, they have never existed in any society in human history. Nonetheless, they are to be applied worldwide, at the tip of a spear (or cruise missile) if necessary.

Dr. Fleming's alternative is rooted in "everyday life," the local realities of blood and soil, custom and tradition, friendship and faith, and in the wisdom born of the experiences these realities beget. This wisdom finds expression in folktales and fables, in ancient Hebrew Scriptures and Greek philosophy, and in medieval casuistry. It is the method to solving ethical problems great and small, and it is the method that undergirds authentic conservatism.

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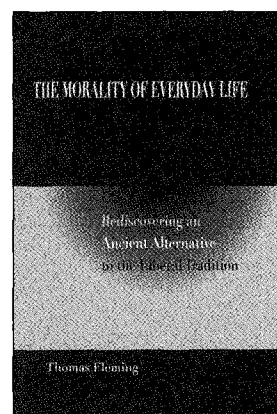
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Reactionary Radicals

RADICAL REACTIONARIES

Don't Blame Bryan

Cut From a Different Cloth

by Jeff Taylor



In his recent biography of William Jennings Bryan, *A Godly Hero*, Michael Kazin joins a long line of historians in making the claim that Bryan (1860-1925) was an ideological precursor of Franklin D. Roosevelt. In the book's Introduction, Kazin asserts that Bryan "did more than any other man—between the fall of Grover Cleveland and the election of Woodrow Wilson—to transform his party from a bulwark of *laissez-faire* into the citadel of liberalism we identify with Franklin D. Roosevelt and his ideological descendants." Significantly, he offers no detailed evidence to support this claim beyond a laundry list of Bryan-endorsed reforms. As an admirer of FDR, Kazin has probably engaged in wishful thinking. There are things to admire about Roosevelt if we consider only his rhetoric and reputation, but a close look at his record leaves us with little to celebrate.

A decade ago, Kazin authored *The Populist Persuasion*, which examined populism of both the left-wing and right-wing varieties with sympathy and sensitivity. So it is somewhat surprising that he does not recognize Roosevelt for what he was: an elitist to the core. Following in the footsteps of Woodrow Wilson, Franklin Roosevelt was a Hamiltonian. In the eyes of such Democrats as Vincent Astor, Averell Harriman, Dean Acheson, and Arthur Schlesinger, Jr., that was a good thing. To a Jeffersonian, it is not. Bryan was a true follower of Thomas Jefferson. The Great Commoner was willing to embrace the positive (activist) state in isolated instances, but he preferred to work at the state and local levels. He never gave up his commitment to states' rights and decentralization, and he advocated an America-first foreign policy, which is why most prominent Bryanites opposed FDR by the late 1930's. For every Josephus Daniels who remained loyal to Roosevelt, there were two Thomas Gores who loathed his presidency.

Bryan's greatest inspirations were Jesus and Jefferson, neither of whom greatly influenced Roosevelt. Of his contemporaries, Bryan was perhaps most indebted to Russian novelist and philosopher Leo Tolstoy, with whom he conversed in 1903 for 12 hours straight. Bryan did not embrace Tolstoy's anarchopacifism completely, but the meeting strengthened his belief in decentralization and peace. Needless to say, Tolstoy's thinking was light years away from Roosevelt's in every particular—from

trusts, to government, to war.

In almost every campaign and on almost every issue, Roosevelt and Bryan were on opposing sides, despite their shared membership in the Democratic Party. (Though both were lifelong Democrats, Roosevelt voted for Republican William McKinley instead of Bryan in the 1900 presidential election.) Roosevelt was as militaristic as Bryan was pacifist. Assistant Secretary of the Navy Roosevelt supported U.S. entry into World War I; Secretary of State Bryan did all he could to keep American blood from spilling on European soil, and he ultimately resigned from the Wilson Cabinet and repudiated the President's foreign policy.

In 1920, Roosevelt boosted the presidential candidacy of Herbert Hoover, whom he would later face in a general election. Bryan and other traditional liberals correctly identified Hoover as a front man for J.P. Morgan & Co. When FDR agreed to be the running mate of 1920 Democratic nominee James Cox, Bryan gave only tepid support to the ticket because of its friendship with liquor interests and corporate monopolies. Roosevelt was a prominent supporter of Al Smith at the 1920, 1924, and 1928 conventions; Bryan consistently opposed the New York governor. In 1924, Roosevelt urged liberals to support Democratic nominee John W. Davis rather than waste their votes on the La Follette-Wheeler third-party effort. Bryan denounced Davis as a Morgan attorney and was bitterly disappointed when his brother, Gov. Charles Bryan, agreed to run alongside Davis. After the 1924 election, Roosevelt called for a national party strategy session. He planned to exclude Bryan from the conference, and the Bryan brothers later announced that they were opposed to FDR's proposed session.

Between 1920 and 1928, Roosevelt was a Wall Street financier. He was eventually elected governor of New York with the support of big bankers and businessmen, and the same group of imperial-minded corporatists would dominate his administration in Washington. Roosevelt supported U.S. membership in the League of Nations and World Court without provisions that would protect U.S. sovereignty. His foreign-policy views were shaped by his personal enterprises and by his association with the newly formed Council on Foreign Relations. A think tank founded in 1921 largely through the machinations of the Morgan banking firm, the bipartisan CFR—half of whose members were Wilson-Roosevelt Democrats—was unremittably hostile toward Bryan Democrats.

Following the Preamble to the Constitution, Bryan believed that the federal government should "promote the general wel-

Jeff Taylor is a political scientist in Rochester, Minnesota. This article is adapted from the book Where Did the Party Go?: William Jennings Bryan, Hubert Humphrey, and the Jeffersonian Legacy (University of Missouri Press, 2006).

fare,” and he strongly opposed class favoritism and the redistribution of wealth through unfair monetary policies. Instead, he favored equality (equal rights) and justice (the fair application of laws). Bryan invoked the Jeffersonian maxim “Equal rights for all; special privileges for none” throughout his career. In 1900, he insisted that

The democratic party does not expect to destroy poverty . . . The democratic party is protesting against those things which interfere with the natural distribution of rewards and punishments. It is protesting against legislation which gathers from millions in order to give an undeserved advantage to hundreds, or at most, thousands. . . . Equality in rights does not mean equality in possessions or equality in enjoyment.

Throughout his career, Bryan contended that big business was in control of the U.S. government and fought to free the American economy from the predations of monopoly capitalists. He viewed monopoly, whether economic or political, as the enemy of both equality and diversity.

Bryan’s concern for the common people did not make him an early advocate of the welfare state created by Franklin Roosevelt, Hubert Humphrey, and Lyndon Johnson. However, the failure of historians to understand the political context of the day has contributed to a perception that Bryan Democrats supported federal-government activism. Astute contemporaries of Bryan did not make this mistake. Herbert Croly, a Hamiltonian Republican, believed that the dedication of Bryan and other Jeffersonians to strict constructionism and states’ rights had “hamstrung” the government so that little could be accomplished in the way of reform. In 1908, Bryan proudly wore the label: “I am a strict constructionist, if that means to believe that the Federal Government is one of delegated powers and that constitutional limitations should be carefully observed.”

With plutocrats in control of the federal government, any kind of reform that attempted to create a condition of “Equal rights for all; special privileges for none” could be seen as a move in the direction of a positive state. Indeed, given the context, any attempt to restore government neutrality regarding income, manufacturing, banking, and trade required positive state action.

Bryan specifically condemned anarchy in the wake of Presi-

dent McKinley’s assassination. However, he was closer to anarchism than to state socialism. Invoking Tolstoy, he wrote in 1906 that “It is much easier to conceive of a voluntary association between persons desiring to work together according to the Christian ideal, than to conceive of the successful operation of a system, enforced by law, wherein altruism is the controlling principle.” Unlike Tolstoy, Bryan believed that government could be a force for good, but he worked for “just” government—not paternalistic or “compassionate” government. According to Bryan, “A government is strong in proportion as it rests upon justice; it becomes weak in proportion as injustice is substituted for justice.”

Throughout his career, Bryan contended that big business was in control of the U.S. government and fought to free the American economy from the predations of monopoly capitalists. Bryan viewed monopoly, whether economic or political, as antithetical to both equality and diversity, because it concentrated power into the hands of a small group of like-minded people. This is why Bryan so strongly favored antitrust legislation. Breaking up private monopolies was a negative act designed to restore the nation’s economic freedom, competition, and balance. He was willing to use government to control the actions of big business because he distinguished between the God-given rights of human beings and the state-given rights of corporations. This was not a rejection of *laissez-faire*. In fact, it could be argued that corporations themselves represented a rejection of free enterprise since they were chartered by state governments and often depended on political favors. Bryan was neither a state socialist nor a state capitalist: In economic affairs, government should be neutral, refusing to confiscate and operate private enterprise or to protect and favor private enterprise.

In 1904, Bryan suggested that the government could assist citizens with some types of social insurance as an alternative to private insurance policies and savings accounts—a reflection of his distrust and enmity toward banks and insurance companies. In general, Bryan’s response to the harmful effects of big business was to encourage antitrust laws and criminal prosecution, not government enlargement or regulations. Bryan did not believe that support for national legislation concerning child labor, alcohol prohibition, and woman suffrage was inconsistent with states’ rights. The 18th and 19th Amendments were duly submitted to the states for ratification.

In 1922, Bryan opposed the Dyer Anti-Lynching Bill. Like most Americans of European descent in his day, Bryan took the concept of white supremacy for granted. Nonetheless, he condemned the lynching of blacks, and, as an attorney, he rejected private “justice.” In fact, he did not support capital punishment, even when it was procured by due process of law, because he opposed the death penalty on moral grounds. Still, he opposed the Dyer Bill, as did many other political leaders, because, according to the Constitution, law enforcement was a state and local, not a federal, responsibility.

Aproponent of national self-determination and sovereignty, Bryan condemned American and British imperialism. This can be seen in his attitudes toward the Spanish-American War, the Filipino rebellion, British rule in India, the Boxer Rebellion, the Boer War, the Hay-Bunau-Varilla Treaty, and home rule for Ireland. Anti-imperialism was the cornerstone of his 1900 campaign: “We assert that no nation can long endure half republic and half empire, and we warn the American

people that imperialism abroad will lead quickly and inevitably to despotism at home.” While rejecting the idea of global Manifest Destiny for America, Bryan tended to be paternalistic toward the weaker nations of the Western Hemisphere. As secretary of state, Bryan’s application of the Monroe Doctrine to Mexico, the Caribbean, and South America was his most glaring departure from the fundamental principles of Jeffersonian foreign policy.

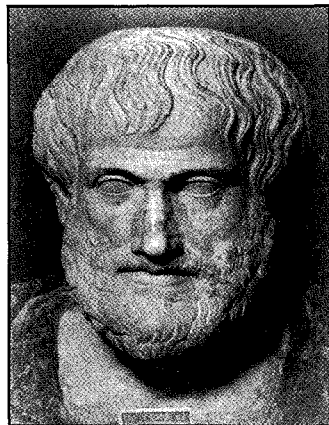
Bryan and his supporters resented conservative attempts to make American economic and foreign policy subservient to the interests of England. In 1916-17, Bryan argued against the proposed League to Enforce Peace, writing, “America first! . . . Beware of Entangling Alliances.” He rejected the idea that the U.S. government should police the world. In 1919-20, he supported ratification of the Treaty of Versailles and U.S. membership in the League of Nations, hoping that more cooperation would lead to more peace. Together with Sen. Thomas Walsh (D-MT), he proposed amendments to the treaty that would protect U.S. sovereignty. At the 1924 Democratic Convention, Bryan proposed a plank requiring a national referendum on joining the League of Nations, in opposition to internationalist Newton D. Baker’s plank calling for U.S. entry into the League.

In 1916, Bryan was willing to lend support to the idea of an international court whose rulings would only be advisory, but he remained committed to the concept of national sovereignty. When he endorsed U.S. adherence to the World Court in 1923, he added that participation in it “should always be on the condition that we shall not be bound by the action of other nations except insofar as our government affirmatively endorses the action taken.” In 1922, Bryan supported the Four-Pow-

er Treaty only after a stipulation was added which clarified that the agreement would not commit the United States to an armed alliance. Bryan’s occasional conspicuous departures from isolationism stemmed from a conflict between a Jeffersonian desire to avoid foreign entanglements and a Christian desire to make the world a better place. Highlighting the resulting ambivalence, historian Kendrick Clements calls him a “missionary isolationist.”

During the 1964 presidential campaign, Walter Lippmann compared Barry Goldwater to Bryan, and, three decades later, Ralph Reed did the same with Pat Buchanan. These apologists for the power elite intended their comparisons to be disparaging. In these pages, Thomas Fleming also compared Buchanan to Bryan—but favorably—in his essay “From Bryan to Buchanan” (March 1996), in which he identified a stream of populist-decentralist-moralist political thought running from Bryan to the Old Right. Granted, there are some differences in emphasis between old-style populists and paleoconservatives, but both share a common lineage from Jefferson, the Antifederalists, and other foes of Hamilton in the Old Republic.

In the 1940’s, John T. Flynn saw a charming but ignorant and unprincipled man behind the “Roosevelt myth.” Flynn, an old-fashioned Bryan Democrat, noted that Roosevelt’s “impulsive starts in unconsidered directions, his vanity, his lack of a settled political philosophy, his appetite for political power and his great capacity as a mere politician” turned the presidency into “an instrument of appalling consequences.” Whatever his other vices and virtues, William Jennings Bryan should not be blamed for the legacy of Franklin Delano Roosevelt. 



The Greek Conservative Mind

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Boxed In by the Open Society

by Brian Mitchell

"We have met the enemy, and he is us."

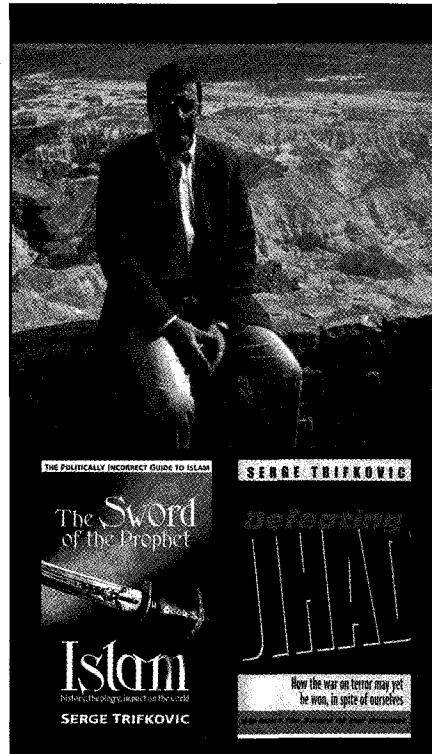
—Walt Kelly's Pogo

Defeating Jihad: How the War on Terror May Yet Be Won, in Spite of Ourselves
by Srdja Trifkovic
Boston: Regina Orthodox Press;
335 pp., \$22.95

Some months before the invasion of Iraq, a well-known neocon stopped by my office to stump for war. It would all be very easy, he said coolly. We just needed to eliminate a handful of people in Saddam Hussein's government, and all resistance would crumble. He was so casual about such dirty work that I was moved to ask, in the words of an old western, how many people in Iraq "needed killin'." He shrugged matter-of-factly and answered, "Two or three thousand."

Well, we've killed many times that, and still more come at us every day with the same idea of driving the infidel Crusaders and Jews from the land of Islam. Ideas, after all, have consequences. Yet many books urging us on to an even wider war tell us less about the ideas of our enemies than about all the people who need killin'. When they do discuss ideas, they offer only ludicrously narrow refutations of terrorism or insanely broad attacks on traditional culture. Witness Michael Le-

Brian Mitchell is the Washington bureau chief of Investor's Business Daily. His latest book is Eight Ways to Run the Country: A New and Revealing Look at Left and Right, due out from Praeger in December 2006.



Melanie Anderson

deen's paean to "creative destruction" in *Against the Terror Masters*:

Creative destruction is our middle name, both within our own society and abroad. We tear down the old order every day, from business to science, literature, art, architecture, and cinema to politics and the law. Our enemies have always hated this whirlwind of energy and creativity, which menaces their traditions (whatever they may be) and shames them for their inability to keep pace. Seeing America undo traditional societies, they fear us, for they do not wish to be undone. . . . They must attack us in order to survive, just as we must destroy them to advance our historic mission.

My good friend (full disclosure) Dr.

Srdja Trifkovic is more precise, to say the least. In both his highly successful *Sword of the Prophet* and his newly published *Defeating Jihad*, he names one particular tradition, Islam, as the source of the problem. That is enough to get him jailed in half a dozen European countries, where ethnic insult is officially more offensive than mayhem and murder. In his latest work, however, Trifkovic actually advocates a saner and more humane stance toward Islam than the escalating clash of civilizations currently under way.

Instead of trying to root out every angry Muslim in Mesopotamia, Trifkovic advises a defensive war of exclusion at home and disengagement abroad, a strategy requiring less killing of Muslims but more candor about Islam. "The victory will come not by conquering Mecca for America," he writes, "but by disengaging America from Mecca and by excluding Mecca from America."

The problem with Islam is that the religion is essentially a political ideology, albeit one with a metaphysical base. "Politics is not 'part of Islam,' a separate sphere of existence which is then eventually amalgamated with Islam," Trifkovic writes. "Rather, politics is the inherent core of the Islamic imperative of Allah's sovereignty." The very word *Islam* means submission to Allah and *sharia*, an elaborate legal code based on the Koran and the sayings of Muhammad (*Haditha*). *Sharia* claims universal jurisdiction over believers and unbelievers everywhere. It requires unbelievers to submit to Muslim rule and believers to fight for that submission.

There is therefore no possibility of separating church and state in Islam. In-

deed, there is no Islamic “church” at all in the Christian sense, no institutional structure of the Muslim *umma* or community besides the Muslim state. There is also no possibility of accommodating Islam to American democracy, for “Islam itself is a radical, revolutionary ideology, inherently seditious and inimical [to] American values and institutions.”

To meet the threat, Trifkovic recommends a strategy much along the lines of the American response to international communism. Abroad, the United States should oppose the spread of Muslim influence in the Balkans and Caucasus but not meddle directly in Muslim countries. At home, she should subject the Muslim presence to intense scrutiny, as she did the Communist Party in the early 20th century.

Here, Trifkovic does not mince words. He bluntly advises us that spying on Muslims in America is both “justified and necessary” and that mosques should have to register with the attorney general and submit to government supervision like any other “hate group.” Law-enforcement officials should not be discouraged from profiling Muslims, and Muslim Americans should not be granted security clearances. Muslims activists should be deported, whether citizens or not, and immigration of Muslims should be all but ended.

Trifkovic expects that most Americans would welcome such measures, and I suspect that he is right. The public has not been too bothered by revelations of warrantless eavesdropping by the National Security Agency, and a likely reason is that most people believe that the NSA is not listening in on average Americans but on Muslim immigrants phoning home.

There are a lot of things that are very popular with the people but absolutely impossible for their elected representatives, however, and a crackdown on Islam is one of them. It isn’t that Muslims are already so influential in America that our pols must pay them attention. Rather, our own political principles make it virtually impossible to define Islam as an alien influence.

If the “War on Terror” must be compared with the Cold War, we should see ourselves not as the hard-core anticommunists of the pre-McCarthy era but as the desperate Soviet ideologues trapped in their own failing system. Trifkovic himself makes the connection:

economy could not be solved because the solution remained outside the ideological parameters of the decision-making community. To consider capitalism as an option was illegitimate, as it would have demanded a paradigm shift that could not stop short of altering the system as a whole.

“The debate on Islamic terrorism in the United States has the same Soviet quality,” Trifkovic continues. “It rarely touches on the fundamentals of policy or history” but merely quibbles over possible applications of our obligatory assumptions. Judging by the long lines at airport-security gates, we can only conclude that our soviets are working harder to save our assumptions than to save our selves.

The first fatal assumption is the belief that religion does not really matter, that wealth and freedom can fully satisfy the yearnings of the human heart, and that people only need religion when they do not have iPods. Reasoning in this manner, we must conclude that Islam is not to blame for our present conflict, and pointing out that our enemies are all Muslim (and not all poor or uneducated or even Arab) is therefore divisive, unhelpful, and un-American.

A second assumption is that any conflict between Christianity and Islam is Christianity’s fault. Only historical ignorance and anti-Christian animus can account for this assumption, but our rul-

ing elites lack neither. It is telling that the first major film to capitalize on post-September 11 passions (*Kingdom of Heaven*) depicted the Christians as the-villains.

From these assumptions come liberal Europe’s odd tolerance of illiberal Islam and sense of moral obligation to Muslim immigrants. The combination amounts to a civilizational death wish, unprecedented in history. “No other race subscribes to these moral principles,” writes Jean Raspail, “because they are weapons of self-annihilation.”

The evidence Trifkovic adduces for this death wish is appalling. Shortly after September 11, British Prime Minister Tony Blair welcomed Muslim leaders to 10 Downing Street to tell them, “What happened in America was not the work of Islamic terrorists, it was not the work of Muslim Terrorists. It was the work of terrorists, pure and simple.” Imagine Winston Churchill assuring Oswald Mosley that the Blitz was not the work of German aviators or even Nazi aviators, but aviators, pure and simple.

Europe’s sympathy for Islam has deeper roots than most Americans might imagine. Enlightened libidos eager to cross the bounds of Christian morality were attracted to the legendary licentiousness of the harem and the Turkish bath. (Trifkovic reports that, in England, homosexuality became known as the “Persian” or “Turkish” vice.) At the same time, Islam itself was admired for its simplicity and austerity, in contrast to Christian weakness and decadence. Gibbon

Defeating Jihad: How the War on Terror May Yet Be Won, In Spite of Ourselves

“The impact of the ongoing Muslim migratory influx into the developed world, and the consequences of the existence of a multimillion Muslim diaspora in Western Europe and North America, is inseparable from the coherent long-term defense of the homeland. A real strategy must entail denying actual and potential terrorists the foothold inside the United States.

“Controlling the borders is only the first step. The application of clearly defined criteria related to terrorism in deciding who will be admitted into the country, and in determining who should be allowed to stay from among those who are already here, is essential. Carefully evaluating the profile of all prospective visitors to America, and systematically re-examining the behavior of all resident aliens and the bona-fides of naturalized citizens, is an essential ingredient of a serious anti-terrorist strategy. To that end . . . Islamic activism needs to be treated as an *eminently political*, rather than ‘religious’ activity.

“Rediscovering who we are is the essential prerequisite for all of the above. The victory in the war on terrorism ultimately has to be won in the domain of culture. It can be won only by an America—and Britain, and France, and Italy . . . , that has regained its awareness of its moral, spiritual, and civilizational roots.”

—Srdja Trifkovic

The problem of centrally planned

openly sympathized with the manly Muslim Turks against the effeminate Christian Byzantines caricatured in his *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* (1776-88), while Montesquieu assumed a Persian perspective to satirize French society in his *Persian Letters* (1721).

Trifkovic relates this early anti-Christian, pro-Muslim bias to the sympathy of such European leftists as Bernard-Henri Levy for Muslims in Bosnia and Kosovo. The Jewishness of Levy and many other European intellectuals only adds to the left's chronic Christophobia. Even amid a surge in attacks on Jews by Muslims in Europe, European leftists have preferred to point the finger at the usual suspects—"young, disaffected white Europeans, often stimulated by extreme right-wing groups," according to Beate Winkler, head of the European Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia.

Recently, in the wake of attacks in Europe by outright terrorists, European nations have taken modest steps to defend themselves. But simple demographics appear ready to finish what Europe's feminist, multicultural, anti-Christian elites have started. Birthrates of Europeans throughout Europe are barely half of what is needed for replacement, while the Muslim population of Europe, now 50 million, is expected to double in 20 years. By 2025, Muslims will account for one third of all births in the European Union.

The situation in the United States is more hopeful. There are far fewer Muslims in America (less than two million), and there are many more Christians. Trifkovic writes that, in France, Holland, Belgium, and Germany, more people worship in mosques on Friday than in churches on Sunday, whereas over 80 percent of Americans still call themselves Christians. He does stress the negative, noting that Christians totaled above 90 percent in 1990, while the number of Americans professing no religion doubled between 1990 and 2000. It is true that nominal Christians raise non-Christians nowadays, but it is also true that committed Christians raise more children. Others have argued, on the basis of red-state population growth and recent electoral trends, that the country is becoming more Christian.

Unfortunately, we Americans have our own useful idiots eager to absolve Islam of any blame. There are the editors at Houghton Mifflin who (by my own count) tell schoolchildren ten times in a two-volume set that Muslims are "toler-

ant," and ten times in the same set that Christians "persecute" people. There are the producers at PBS who do not question Muslim claims in the miniseries *Mohammad: Legacy of a Prophet* but make skepticism toward the central tenets of Christianity the basis of the documentary *From Jesus to Christ*. And there are the politicians (some actually in politics) whose only hope is to con us all, Muslims included, into believing that Islam is a religion of peace and that *jihad* is only for heretics.

It is an indication of how bad things are that Trifkovic himself at times adopts the rhetoric of the left to make his point, assuming for the reader's sake that liberal democracy is good and religious discrimination is bad, then carving out an exception that justifies treating this one particular religion illiberally. "No court in a democratic country," he writes, "should uphold the constitutionality of any measure targeted at a particular religion." He goes on to say, in the same paragraph, that "the First Amendment should not extend to Sharia because of its inherently discriminatory nature."

In the course of his book, Trifkovic moves from telling it like it is according to an older Christian understanding of the world to recommending a modern American rationalization of religious discrimination. He insists that Islam itself is "inherently seditious" but recommends action against only "Islamic activism," defined as

the political act of propagating, disseminating or otherwise supporting "Jihad" . . . , discrimination against Christians, Jews and other "infidels," discrimination and violence against women and sexual minorities, anti-Jewish bigotry, sanction of slavery, etc.

Trifkovic knows, of course, that the Koran propagates all these things and that there can be no Islam without the Koran. His point seems to be that the Constitution empowers us to ban Islam because of its politics and not because of its religion. "We do not need new legal theories, or a different conception of the First Amendment," he writes. "[W]e need an educational campaign."

He might be right about the law. As Justice Jackson pointed out, the Constitution is not a suicide pact, and there is certainly no overestimating the willingness of American jurists, when provided

enough political cover, to argue around inconvenient legal obstacles.

It seems to me, however, that a paradigm shift sufficient to get us honestly out of our ideological box would require us to admit that the First Amendment's Anti-Establishment Clause is a large part of the problem. Any schoolboy can see that, if some religions are inherently seditious, a constitution tolerating all religions invites its own overthrow. Our educational campaign must therefore teach two truths: that Islam is seditious, and that the Founding Fathers were wrong. Teaching the former and not the latter will cause confusion and keep us thinking inside the box.

There is also the danger that the prosecution of "Islamic activism" alone, especially when clouded by the requirement of unrestricted religious freedom, will not protect us from "moderate" Muslims who disavow the seditious aspects of their religion only until they are too strong to oppose. Trifkovic indeed warns that moderates cannot be trusted because Muhammad's doctrine of *taqiyya* sanctions dissembling for the sake of Allah. He also warns that nominal Muslims, when demoralized by Western culture, sometimes sincerely rediscover their own true faith—with violent consequences.

What is needed to strengthen this book's recommendations for a practical response to Islam is a more thorough theoretical treatment of the problem of Popper's Paradox, which says (in words too plain for Karl Popper himself) that even open societies, if they are to remain open to some, must remain closed to others. A society such as Israel seeking to remain open to all Jews must remain closed to some Gentiles. Likewise, a society such as Belarus seeking to remain open to Orthodox Christianity must remain closed to the likes of George Soros and Michael Ledeen. And if Srdja Trifkovic is right about Islam, a society seeking to remain open to average Americans must remain closed to all Muslims.

This is a difficult truth for politically practical Americans today, but the danger of denying it was foreseen by farsighted Antifederalists such as the Rev. David Caldwell of North Carolina, who complained, at the state convention on ratification, that the Constitution would leave the country open to "Jews and Pagans of every kind," who might "at some future period . . . endanger the character of the United States." History has proved Caldwell correct, and the time has come to admit it.

The Gods of Athens

by Thomas Fleming

Polytheism and Society at Athens

by Robert Parker

Oxford: Oxford University Press;
544 pp., \$125.00

Some years ago, at a seminar on Homer for mostly Greekless scholars, an eminent American conservative opined that, whatever merits there were in the civilization of ancient Greeks, no one could take their childish religion seriously. Somewhat testily, I replied that a religion that had attracted the attention of such considerable scholars as Ulrich von Wilamowitz-Moellendorf (I'll keep this short), A.N. Cook, Walter Otto, Martin Nilsson, Sir Hugh Lloyd-Jones, J.P. Vernant, and Walter Burkert could hardly be unworthy of serious scholarly attention, and no one interested in literature could fail to take a deep interest in a religious mythology that had inspired the imagination of non-Greek poets from Vergil to Eliot.

For most nonclassicists, Greek polytheism presents a problem. How could the people who "invented" our civilization have been so naive as to worship dozens of gods to whom they attributed so many unifying and conflicting tales? Perhaps the question should be put the other way around: How could we suppose that the religion that inspired Sophocles and formed the mind of Plato and Aristotle could be anything but profound?

Before approaching the subject, some of the ideological rubbish that obstructs our view should be cleared away. Since at least Nietzsche, neopagans have argued that polytheism *per se*, which they claim defines the Greek mind, encouraged peaceful toleration of other religions. Socrates, who was accused both of atheism and of introducing alien gods, might have a different opinion. It is only from a rather rigid Judeo-Christian (I use the word advisedly in its literal sense) perspective that there is such a thing as generic paganism. Greek and Roman religion (to name two rather closely related examples) are quite different, and while comparative analysis is a useful tool, it must be preceded by a careful and minute examination of the facts that can be discovered.

The comparative study of ancient religion has been distorted by an obsession with dying gods, with imagined conflicts (as between Apollo and Dionysus, Chthonic and Olympian), with Mystery cults, and with so-called Orphism. The alternative approach, a patient and exhaustive scrutiny of every scrap of literature or fragmentary inscription, while it may not lead to breathtaking conclusions, is the only method that an honorable scholar may employ. That was, in essence, Wilamowitz's response to Nietzsche's brilliantly irresponsible first book, *The Birth of Tragedy*.

In *Polytheism and Society at Athens*, Robert Parker eschews grand speculations, and, while he sometimes cannot see even a tree (much less the forest) for all the lichens and mosses of doubt and skepticism that he has deliberately accumulated to obscure the view, this book is a welcome addition to his earlier volumes on Greek myths and on the history of Athenian religion. Not intended as an introduction to Athenian religion, *Polytheism* provides an invaluable discussion of religion's function in Athenian society. Parker takes up several important questions: Who were the priests and what did they do? What reverence did Athenians pay to their ancestors? In what sense and to what degree can tragedies and comedies be regarded as religious rituals? How were festivals such as the Panathenaea and the Anthesteria managed, and what is their broader social and political significance?

It would do the author an injustice to summarize his arguments without providing his evidence. His approach combines a meticulous combing of the ancient evidence with the clever device of searching the secondary literature, looking sometimes for stray insights and sometimes for the least foolish opinions offered—often, by quite foolish scholars, whom he always treats (or at least pretends to treat) with respect.

Parker is better at raising questions and scrutinizing evidence than he is at drawing conclusions, and the frequent occurrence of such phrases as "paucity of evidence," "little is known," "evidence is lacking," "were the evidence fuller," "attested . . . though rather shakily," and "further details remain very unclear" bears witness to the scholar's honesty as much as to the timidity and equivocation that has infected scholarship to the point that it sometimes seems as if writers of academic books are concerned less with

making sense of the evidence than with not being caught making a mistake.

Like too many academic works today, *Polytheism* reads in places like footnotes in search of a text. This is a pity, because no one is in a better position to shed light on the richness and diversity of religious practices in ancient Attica than Parker. With all its limitations, Parker's book is an indispensable work for students and scholars and for anyone who seriously wants to understand Athenian democracy.

Thomas Fleming is the editor of *Chronicles* and the author, most recently, of *The Morality of Everyday Life*.

Dinner in Moscow

by Jeremy Black

June 1941: Hitler and Stalin

by John Lukacs

New Haven: Yale University Press;
192 pp., \$25.00

June 1941 is an important and valuable book. Rather than provide the lives of Hitler and Stalin in parallel, historian John Lukacs seeks carefully to probe the dynamic of the relationship between the two men in order to illuminate a pivotal moment in world history. At this, he is brilliantly successful. Lukacs's spare account, devoid of superfluous material, is a most useful contribution to the literature of World War II, owing, in part, to its historiographical and intellectual perspective. For Lukacs keeps the focus resolutely on individuals, on their motives and purposes, between which he carefully distinguishes, and on the intended and unintended consequences of their actions. This theme, implicit throughout the book, is occasionally made explicit:

In 1941 and exactly on 22 June 1941, everything depended on two men, Hitler and Stalin. This in itself refutes the social-scientific and current opinion according to which history, especially as we advance into the mass age, is ruled by vast economic and material forces and not by individual persons.

The Second World War was not only marked but decided by personalities, by the inclinations and decisions of men such as Hitler, Churchill, Stalin, Roosevelt.

Returning historical attention to individuals entails the difficult work of focusing on their purposes and carefully weighing evidence. Thus, Lukacs includes an important Appendix on "The Mystery of Hitler's 'Letter' and the Courier Plane," offering a valuable corrective and supplement to David Murphy's *What Stalin Knew: The Enigma of Barbarossa*, published in 2005.

Lukacs argues that opposition to Britain was key to the policies of both Hitler and Stalin, not the mutual hostility of the two men or Hitler's anticommunism. It is scarcely original to note that Operation Barbarossa, the German invasion of the Soviet Union in 1941, was in part designed to put pressure on Britain (Ian Kershaw has recently made this point, while suggesting that Hitler was concerned about his narrowing options at the time), yet Lukacs skillfully links this goal to the developing crisis in German-Soviet relations.

Indeed, as he points out, the British worried that the Germans would succeed in their attack on the Soviet Union. There were fears that the Germans would advance through the Caucasus, threatening the British position in the Middle East and sharpening concern regarding the prospect of a German advance *via* Turkey or Cyprus, or perhaps both. The prospect of either encouraged British planning for a forward defense of the Middle East, in Syria and Iraq, and for the occupation of Iran to add strategic depth to the British positions in India and the Persian Gulf. This occupation, which was carried out in concert with the Soviet Union, in some respects looked back to the 1907 agreement between the two powers over spheres of influence in Iran. Concern about German options also helps explain the British shipment of materiel to the Soviet Union once the Germans attacked. (In a forthcoming work, Alexander Hill will demonstrate that Soviet-converted British heavy tanks made a major contribution to the Battle of Moscow in the winter of 1941.)

If Hitler struck at the Soviet Union to get at Britain, recalling Napoleon's attempt in 1812 to cut Britain away from the Continental trading system, Stalin's response to Hitler (Lukacs insists) power-

fully reflected his own animosity to Britain. In each case, hostility to Britain's political position was a significant factor, but so also was a rejection of liberal capitalism both as a domestic agenda for liberty and freedom and as an international agenda focused on opposition to dictatorial expansionism combined with support for the independence of small states. For Lukacs, Hitler and Stalin represented German and Russian reactions to the Age of Reason and "against the world of a bourgeois civilization that reached its peaks around the time when they were born." Thus, he cogently dismisses the left-wing tendency to condemn bourgeois civilization as a progenitor of Hitler.

Today, much of the anticapitalist and antiliberal animosity that Hitler and Stalin expressed is recast as criticism of the United States, which makes the latter's craven response to tyranny in the late 1930's and in 1940 ironic as well as deplorable. The United States did little both in response to fascist expansionism in the 1930's and when an array of neutral powers were overrun in 1940 by Hitler and Stalin. (Indeed, throughout World War II, Canada made a bigger financial contribution *per capita* to the cause of freedom than did the United States.) Moreover, throughout the 20th century, some Americans provided key support to an Irish terrorist movement that was similarly anticapitalist, antiliberal, and antidemocratic and that, during two world wars, also benefited from German backing.

Lukacs notes that Hitler and Stalin shared, along with an antipathy to Britain, many values as well, resulting in mutual respect between the two men, including during the war. Stalin admired Hitler's brutal suppression of opposition in 1934, while the Soviets prefigured the Germans in using specially converted gassing lorries. Stalin was more than willing to subordinate the cause of international communism, about which he was dubious, to that of state expansion in concert with Germany. And in August 1939, the Molotov-Ribbentrop pact was celebrated in Moscow with Stalin toasting "the health of this great man," Hitler. (This is not an episode that is much discussed by the left.) Both dictators were also antisemitic, and both wished to see Poland removed from the face of the earth.

Lukacs's account of the dinner in Moscow is typical of his successful anchoring of major themes in a fine grasp of the particular. His discussion of the interaction

of personalities is acute, and he presents admirable sketches of second-rank players in his drama. At times, the dismissals are brutal (Trotsky, for example, is described as a fool), yet they are always pertinent. Lukacs introduces ideas ably and presents them clearly, as in his account of how Stalin became a nationalist focused on the state: "By 1939 the word *state* had become sacrosanct in official [Soviet] terminology . . . more revered even than the interests of the party."

Lukacs highlights Stalin's monumental failure of judgment in the face of Germany's move to war. Stalin had not grasped Hitler's intentions, had dismissed intelligence information as British plants, and had ignored advice from his military. In 1940, Neville Chamberlain had fallen when British failure in the early stages of the war had compounded doubts about his pre-war policy of appeasement. Chamberlain, in the spring of 1939, had switched to an anti-German policy; Stalin, in contrast, made no such move. The nearest equivalent to the British guarantees to Poland and Rumania would have been Soviet guarantees in 1941 to Yugoslavia and Greece, followed by a declaration of war when they were invaded; but Soviet policy was very different—Stalin's appeasement was far more craven.

Stalin also, characteristically, refused to address the people upon the German invasion. Instead, he had Moscow flooded with agents. Lukacs takes the story forward to consider Stalin's nervous collapse of will on June 28-30, when the Germans reached Minsk. He also notes the possibility of his consideration of the idea of a settlement with Germany, similar to that reached by Lenin in 1918, which might have been used to vindicate such an agreement.

Stalin's was not the only will to collapse. Rodric Braithwaite, in *Moscow 1941: A City and Its People at War* (London, 2006), discusses the panic that occurred in that city in mid-October—a panic that owed much to official actions, including the movement of industrial plants. Managers and other fleeing officials were attacked by the workers they were abandoning in scenes described by the head of the NKVD as "anarchy." Stalin, however, decided not to flee and used the NKVD to restore order by meting out punishment and terror.

In his conclusion to the book, Lukacs once again ponders the nature of history, identifying the still-prevalent misconcep-

tion of history as the certainty of the historian's ability to produce a definitive account of his subject. He asserts it as the duty of the historian to struggle against the prevalence of untruths, because, as he points out, "sentiments and twisted statements of 'facts'" are all too common in the profession. In this respect, Lukacs dismisses the notion that the German invasion was a case of preventive war, preempting Soviet attack—a view popular among German apologists. He criticizes also the related argument that Hitler's war with Stalin was a necessary one, and that Churchill and Roosevelt were foolish not to realize this. Instead, his careful discussion of Hitler and National Socialism in terms other than as a reaction to the evils of communism helps highlight the danger that they posed to the West, thus making the failure of British, French, and American appeasement very apparent.

Jeremy Black is author of World War Two: A Military History (New York, 2004) and Altered States: America Since the Sixties (London, 2006).

The Asiatic Parallel

by Howard Sitton

**A Terrible Revenge:
The Ethnic Cleansing of the
East European Germans**
by Alfred-Maurice de Zayas
New York: Palgrave Macmillan;
224 pp., \$19.95

World War II has been very slow to yield up its secrets. We learned easily about the heinous misdeeds perpetrated by the Axis powers upon innocent populations, but it has been harder to expose and explain the "secrets" of our conduct toward innocent civilians and ordinary soldiers who came under our control or influence. And while research reveals many instances of brutal behavior by Western soldiers, both officers and enlisted men, the behavior of Soviet Russian and Eastern European soldiers, goaded by their leaders and empowered through Allied agreements, established the nadir of murderous bestiality in modern times. These "Allied" crimes took place at the end of the war

and were attendant upon the expulsion of ethnic Germans from historic Germany and other lands they had occupied for hundreds of years.

Shedding light on this shadowy subject is the object of this book and others by Dr. Alfred-Maurice de Zayas, an historian, international lawyer, and former U.N. official who resides in Geneva, Switzerland. *A Terrible Revenge* presents the human side of an Allied policy of bitter yet casual retribution toward ordinary Germans caught in the maelstrom at the end of the war.

As their weary armies gave way before the victors, the plight of the eastern Germans was made plain to all who would see. The Soviets and their cohorts unleashed a campaign of brutality second to none against the native populations they encountered, treating them—women, children, old, and infirm—as combatants to whom no quarter was offered. Hitler's propaganda had branded Slavs as "sub-human," and his Sonderkommando detachment and political henchmen treated them that way. In the end, the Slavs who expelled the Germans produced a mind-bending orgy of rape and violence so repulsive that it is physically unsettling to the reader.

De Zayas describes the early settlement of Germans in eastern regions and their long and peaceful coexistence with their neighbors, showing how the political constructs of modern "peace" treaties destabilized areas containing these settlements in an era of rising nationalism. But it is the violence and privations visited upon the people expelled that are brought into compellingly sharp focus by the literary scheme of individual testimonies of survivors and others concerned, presented against a spare background of international events of the period.

With the entry of the Soviet army into Germany proper in October 1944, the horror began. In Nemmersdorf, men, women, and little children were murdered in the most bestial fashion—the children with blows from gun butts, men by beatings and mutilation, and the women...

Not only German authorities but Swiss war correspondents reported the madness. Take, for example this account from Geneva's *Le Courier* (November 7, 1944):

The war in East Prussia, currently unfolding in the triangle Gumbinnen-Goldap-Ebenrode, is at the

centre of events, especially following the recapture of Goldap by the Germans... The German civilian population has virtually disappeared from the combat area... most... having fled. [As for the rest,]... everyone has been killed by the Red Army... I will spare you the description of the mutilations and the ghastly condition of the corpses on the field. These are impressions that go beyond even the wildest imagination.

Or this, from Hermann Sommer, captain in Fortress Koenigsberg, who reports that

a large number of bodies had the breasts cut off, the genitals stabbed through and were disemboweled... a corporal told me of a church where a girl... had been... crucified on the altar cross...

De Zayas states that, "For reasons best explained by a psychologist, one of the aberrations practiced by the [Soviet] soldiers was to take victims, mostly female, strip them naked and nail them to barn doors in cruciform fashion."

And, according to Hans Graf von Lehn-dorff, a medical doctor in Koenigsberg when it was occupied by the Soviet army,

When it was dark our escort came... and routed us all up.

The women, whimpering or cursing, were dragged out with the help of the Poles... "Davai suda!" "Woman come!" It has a more horrific sound than all the curses in the world. When that which should signify Life stands under the sign of Death, Satan's triumph has reached its zenith. It didn't matter to them in the least that they were handling semi-corpses. Eighty-year-old women were no safer from them than the unconscious ones. (At one time a patient of mine with head injuries, as I discovered later, had been raped over and over again without knowing anything about it.)

Perhaps triggering this behavior were acts of the aforementioned Sonderkommando detachment, Nazi politicians, and some formations of the SS, but it remains a fact that in the conquering Russian and satellite forces, large numbers of soldier-

beasts existed who could commit these atrocities. Certainly, wartime decisions of the "Big Three" to expel Germans from eastern lands played a major role (as did spurs to action from their commander, Marshal Zhukov, and propagandists such as Ilya Ehrenburg).

The role of the Western authorities in empowering Russians, Poles, and others to perform this devil's work is little known. That the Big Three disastrously meddled with the fate of millions can be gathered from discussions of the "future boundaries" of Poland at Yalta. The United States went to Yalta supporting a frontier settlement that "in the east would take the Curzon Line as a basis but would, if possible, include the province of Lwow in Poland . . ." and prepared to

resist the exaggerated claims now being advanced by the Provisional Government of Lublin for "compensation" from Germany which would include . . . Stettin and Breslau in Poland and make necessary the transfer of . . . eight to ten million Germans.

Roosevelt took that position at Yalta (against Stalin, always gently): "The Poles would like East Prussia and part of Germany. . . I raised the question of giving them Lwow at Tehran . . ."

Churchill pulled the rug out from under him: "I have made repeated declarations in Parliament in support of the Soviet claims to the Curzon line, . . . leaving Lvov with Soviet Russia . . ." Churchill said that he "would always support the movement of Polish frontiers to the west since he felt they should receive compensation . . ." (Churchill accepted our ally Russia's seizure of eastern Poland, including Lvov, pursuant to her treaty with the Nazis, although Britain had ostensibly gone to war to protect Polish territorial integrity when Germany invaded from the west.) Churchill

felt that there was a considerable body of British public opinion that would be shocked if it were proposed to move large numbers of Germans . . . although he personally would not be shocked . . . [but] if . . . confined to East Prussia, six million Germans probably could be handled quite aside from moral grounds . . .

Thus, our imprimatur on the deed.

About three-times six million Germans were, in fact, "handled quite aside from moral grounds"; some two million died. De Zayas cites English author and publisher Victor Gollancz:

If the conscience of men ever again becomes sensitive, these expulsions will be remembered to the undying shame of all who committed or connived at them . . . The Germans were expelled, not just with an absence of over-nice consideration, but with the very maximum of brutality.

As Amb. George F. Kennan wrote, "[T]he Russians . . . swept the native population clean in a manner that had no parallel since the days of the Asiatic hordes."

Howard Sitton writes from Carmel Valley, California.

Pictures Into Words

by Mark Royden Winchell

The Habitual Peacefulness of Gruchy:

Poems After Pictures by

Jean-François Millet

by David Middleton

Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press; 80 pp., \$16.95



Readers of *Chronicles* already know that David Middleton is an extraordinarily accomplished poet. For much of the rest of the reading world, unfortunately, he is a well-kept secret. Living in Thibodaux, Louisiana, and teaching at Nicholls State University, he is far removed from the centers of literary power and influence. Even if that were not the case, American poets tend to be part of a coterie confined to other poets and would-be poets. Fortunately, Middleton is not of that ilk.

Some poets paint pictures with words. Others exploit the sensuous music of words. Middleton is one of the select few who can do both equally (and seamlessly) well in the same poem. Like the Nashville Fugitives, he possesses a sure command of the formal resources of verse. But his work shuns the elliptical and ironic mannerisms of John Crowe Ransom and Allen Tate. The closest comparison

among the Fugitives would probably be to Donald Davidson in the late period of his career, when Davidson had transcended the rhetorical excesses of his early verse to achieve true lyrical power and intellectual subtlety. It is to Middleton's credit that he has reached that same level of achievement far more frequently and at a younger age.

Middleton's most recent book, *The Habitual Peacefulness of Gruchy*, is a sequence of 60 poems (some of them published first in these pages) inspired by the work of the 19th-century French painter Jean-François Millet. Middleton was originally struck by what he calls Millet's "sympathetic realism in depicting the harsh life of French peasants in the nineteenth century." (He later discovered that Millet's painting had also influenced "Humility," a poem by Fred Chappell, who is himself an underappreciated Southern writer.) Although each of Middleton's poems could be read in isolation, one can find affinities throughout the volume. He has noted, for example, that lines 12 through 16 of the first poem catalogue typical farm tasks on which he expands in the next six poems. While virtually abandoning rhyme, Middleton writes in formal-verse patterns that must be read aloud to be enjoyed fully. Each poem is composed in four stanzas in an effort to approximate the four-by-four effect of a picture framed.

Gruchy itself is a Norman village near Cherbourg where Millet grew up in rural poverty. Although he later lived in Paris and Barbizon and in an area near the great plain of Chailly, Gruchy was the setting to which his imagination invariably returned. After his first wife died of tuberculosis two years into their marriage, Millet wed a Breton serving girl named Catherine, who bore him nine children and outlived him by 20 years. Middleton identifies her as the muse of this recent volume of verse.

One of the identifying features of the early modernist era in poetry was a stark juxtaposition of decadent imagery from contemporary life with symbols from earlier ages of faith and romance. When Middleton reaches back to an earlier time with which to compare the rural ambience of 19th-century France, however, the effect is frequently (though not invariably) one of natural and theonomous unity. The worlds may be different, but they are not necessarily conflicting. One of the problems in attempting to define *postmodernism* is the fact that

many contemporary poets (such as Middleton) have recovered techniques and beliefs that pre-date the revolutions of the 20th century.

Approximately one third of the poems in *The Habitual Peacefulness of Gruchy* (19 of 60) reference the Bible or Christian theology. In "Potato Planters," for example, the first, second, and fourth stanzas consist of a straightforward description of a farm family planting "a crop some scorn as human food" and then returning home for the night. The third stanza, however, opens up a window to first-century Palestine and to eternity itself:

The trees bring gifts of coolness,
quiet, and shade
To a donkey's dreaming child
where watchful eyes
Of a donkey seem to almost comprehend
The infant still asleep in Bethlehem.

In "Twilight," however, no such hope is available. To be sure, the final two lines of the second stanza do suggest that we might be seeing the image of "a holy family / Going toward Egypt or toward Bethlehem." (Note the ambiguity of the indefinite article and the irony of the fact that, for this particular Hebrew family, Egypt is the route of deliverance and Bethlehem, that of destruction.) But the first line of the third stanza, which begins a sentence that lasts through the balance of the poem, denies the biblical comparison: "No, here's no Joseph with some sheltered flock."

We find other sobering images of our fallen world in "Shepherd Minding His Sheep." Here, we look down upon sheep traveling from one destination to another. Between the second and third stanzas, we are reminded that, despite our privileged view of "tall blades so green and cool in shade . . .," this effect must come from trees that are "undepicted" and which "set our perspective on the scene." Then, in the final stanza, as the sheep begin to enter "Canaan's verdant ground . . .," we realize that our vantage point has been that of Moses, denied entrance to the Promised Land. Although even a glimpse of a country from which he is barred might seem an act of mercy, Middleton leaves no doubt in our mind that what Moses views from Mount Nebo can remind him only of "deprivation's plenitude."

"Sheepfold by Moonlight" could just as easily be called "The Bad Shepherd,"

although the tone of the poem is hardly one of judgment. The first two stanzas simply show us the difficult labors of a poor shepherd "on Chailly plain." Because this shepherd must work in the "faint beams" of the actual moon, he is "shadowed by light but not the source of light." Thus, "the bleating of a lost or straggling lamb / Will go unheard in deep exhaustion's sleep." If it is no Good Shepherd that we see, neither is it a particularly evil one—only the sort of guy who tries to make do by hutching his sheep "in these Arcadian wastes like Paris, Troy, / Or any other city of the plain." One cannot help being struck by the earthly grandeur of the two cities named and by the subtle reminder that Paris of Troy was not only himself a shepherd but—in later tending his political and military flocks—a notoriously bad one at that.

The scene in "Harvesters Resting" reminds the poet (and perhaps the painter before him) of the biblical story of Ruth and Boaz—a natural analogy made several times within the volume. At first, Middleton stresses the contrast between the Old Testament tale, in which the wealthy Boaz rescues Ruth from her poverty, and the straitened economic circumstances of the Norman harvesters. But his final stanza emphasizes the fact that Ruth's marriage brought her something far more than financial security. Although she was born a Moabitess, Ruth's incorporation into Israel made her the ancestress of kings (literally of King David) and, as Middleton need not even point out, of the King of Kings.

The only place in the volume where Middleton speaks in the personal voice is in his penultimate poem "Self-Portrait." The first three stanzas are actually written in the second person, as the poet addresses the painter about the only two pictures in which he depicts himself. But, as we see in his final stanza, Middleton's primary intention is to reveal his own personal motivation behind writing *The Habitual Peacefulness of Gruchy*:

And in these poems I've disap-

peared in you —
Or is it that you've lost yourself in me? —
Our shapes and phrases so alike composed,
Your Channel in the Gulf, my South in Normandy.

Rather than conclude on what some might regard as a self-flexive note, Middleton skips three pages before bringing his book to a magnificent summation with "Angelus." The first stanza reminds us that the Angelus bells ringing from the village church are part of the daily ritual of worship. We then move out of the churchyard into the potato field. Even if the bells cannot be heard this far away, the sky remains gold, despite the fact that the sun has already set. Here,

In attitudes of prayer a man and wife

Think of the Incarnation of their Lord,
The flesh redeemed, a grace creation saved,
Bells pealing from the New Jerusalem
Through history back to Eden's speaking leaves.

Middleton, however, is too sensitive to the mood he has created in these poems to end on such a grandiose tone. The final stanza of "Angelus" returns us to the potato field, where the daily drudgery must continue "till the final angels come." This affirmation sheds a divine light of hope on these pictures turned into words. If the art of the painter and the poet can bestow beauty on the mundane images of everyday life, grace can elevate that beauty to an even higher level of meaning.

Mark Royden Winchell's most recent book, *Reinventing the South: Versions of a Literary Region*, was published by the University of Missouri Press last January.

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Historians in Blunderland

The academy is in an even worse plight than you may imagine. Every so often, surveys reveal just how far America's professors are out of touch with the political and cultural mainstream. Not only do they overwhelmingly register with the Democratic Party, but most adhere to the straitest sect within that tradition, those who regard Howard Dean and Ted Kennedy as drifting perilously toward right-wing reaction.

Lately, however, a group of American historians announced a consensus on the nation's past that is genuinely disturbing. At the University of Louisville, the distinguished McConnell Center sponsors activities focusing on American politics and history. This past February, the center asked 90 practicing historians to nominate the worst blunders in the history of the American presidency. From the responses received, the center's director compiled a list of the ten worst outrages, which historians were then asked to rank-order. The final list received national media attention as the considered verdict of academic historians on the presidential record.

Some of the entries should occasion no surprise, and any such list is likely to include Richard Nixon's involvement in the Watergate cover-up and JFK's Bay of Pigs invasion. But the two items heading the list are strange. The worst mistake of all, it seems, was James Buchanan's failure to oppose secession in his last months in office, followed closely by Andrew Johnson's decision after 1865—in the loaded words of the Associated Press report—"to side with Southern whites and oppose improvements in justice for Southern blacks beyond abolishing slavery."

For very different reasons, both of these are baffling. Nobody would pretend that Buchanan was a great president, but seriously, what could he have done in the context of 1859 or 1860 to prevent a meltdown of the sort that actually occurred following Lincoln's election? What were his options, apart from conceivably changing the Constitution to prevent the election of any party pledged to abolish slavery (and thereby driving New England into secession)? Andrew Jackson's resolute threats to use force probably did prevent South Carolina seceding a generation be-

fore, but the world had changed dramatically since 1832, and the South's perceptions of deadly potential danger were far more acute. Buchanan won this unenviable prize solely because the modern historians fault him for failing to act like a military dictator against a large section of his nation.

To assert that decision X was a dreadful blunder necessarily implies that the person making the judgment believes that a far superior alternative course could and should have been taken, and that the wisdom of that choice should have been evident to the "blunderer." In that case, what do the modern historians think the U.S. government should have done in the immediate aftermath of the Civil War? Ranking Johnson's irenic Reconstruction policies as so dreadful means that the collective wisdom of today's academy sides wholeheartedly with radical Reconstruction. In the context of the 1860's, this meant the near-total and continuing political exclusion of most white voters in the occupied states, the indefinite maintenance of military occupation, and the reduction of the South to colonial status—or perhaps worse, considering the near-genocidal policies floated by some Union commanders. Both Buchanan and Johnson are criticized for their failure to exercise brutal repression over those dreadful recalcitrant white Southerners—although such repression could not fail to provoke antigovernment insurgencies for decades to come and would have sustained an enduring cycle of military brutality, armed resistance, and outright race war.

Even with all the advantages of hindsight, I can think of few policies that presidents could have pursued that might have averted either the catastrophe of the Civil War or the racial injustices of subsequent decades. But I do know how things could have been made far worse—namely, by doing what a sizable cross-section of today's historians think was the natural and morally correct thing to do. By choosing the top two entries in their list, modern scholars demonstrate a harrowing sympathy with extremely authoritarian government, whenever that is claiming to enforce progressive social goals.

Before condemning the blunders list



for what it includes, just think of the incredible abundance of other options that were not even offered to those surveyed. Where are all the countless acts of self-destructive stupidity by admired liberal presidents, actions that would cause lasting harm to the American people? LBJ is included for escalating the Vietnam War but not for countless acts of corruption, influence peddling, and illegal surveillance, most far worse than anything attempted by Nixon. These presumably were not blunders because the media chose not to report them.

Franklin Roosevelt is another notable absentee, although he could, in theory, offer a top-ten list of blunders in his own sole right. Choice examples would include the Yalta agreement, the unwillingness to confront communist influence within his administration and the labor movement, the promotion of Henry Wallace, and the creation of a bureaucratic state and dirigiste economy that would take decades to dismantle. Why does Bill Clinton appear on the catalog of blunders for his personal sexual pastimes but not for the contemptuous disregard of intelligence and national security that would lead inexorably to the cataclysm of September 11, 2001? The only excuse for Jimmy Carter's nonappearance as blunderer extraordinaire is that his presidency offers just too fertile a field for critics. Many would start with his taking the oath of office and work forward from there.

A significant number of American political historians have thus compiled a highly selective list of misdeeds and misfortunes—some dreadful, others pardonable. But their partisan blindness makes them unable to perceive some of the worst presidential blunders, crimes, and misdemeanors so high that they stink to heaven. 

A Third Way

The American love of free enterprise has been one of this country's greatest blessings. The same, however, cannot be said unequivocally of the economic individualism that we too often assume is an indispensable part of the free-enterprise system. The fundamental fallacy of that assumption should be obvious: Every economic transaction, by definition, requires more than one actor. Ideally (as libertarians never cease to remind us), every party to an economic transaction should benefit from it. Realistically (as both experience and the tradition of Catholic social teaching makes clear), it's often the case that some benefit more than others or even at the expense of others, and economic individualism (which an older tradition might have called avarice) is the primary culprit. After all, if we all agree that the main concern of an economic actor should be to maximize his own profit, and he sees a way to do so by, say, exploiting the ignorance of his trading partner, what possible objection can we raise?

Too much of the debate over free trade and the survival of American manufacturing has taken place in these terms. In reality, American manufacturers are not a monolith. Large manufacturers—particularly multinational, publicly held corporations—often have economic interests that are very different from those of small, local, family-owned companies. With the massive resources at their disposal, they have pursued those interests well—at least in terms of economic individualism—by lobbying for free-trade agreements, changes in the tax code, and other legislation that has made it easier to relocate factories south of the border and overseas and to outsource higher-paying jobs.

Most small manufacturers, however, could not take advantage of those “opportunities” even if they wanted to (and many, because of their political and cultural views, would not want to), nor do they individually have the resources to lobby against the measures proposed by multinational corporations. Collectively, they might be able to mount some resistance—but here, again, our stubborn national embrace of economic individualism leads many to view their fellow small

manufacturers always through the lens of competition, without realizing that, in doing so, they may be cutting their own throats.

It may not always be true that what's good for my neighbor is good for me, but it's a possibility that we should constantly consider. And the current crisis in manufacturing—or, more accurately, the current crisis in small manufacturing—is a case in point.

Last November, in “Revitalizing Rockford,” I wrote that

Even today, as manufacturing in Rockford begins to rise back up out of the recent economic downturn, 23 percent of Rockfordians are employed in manufacturing. Another 23 percent hold jobs that are dependent upon local manufacturers. In other words, the economic fate of almost half of the population of Rockford is tied to manufacturing.

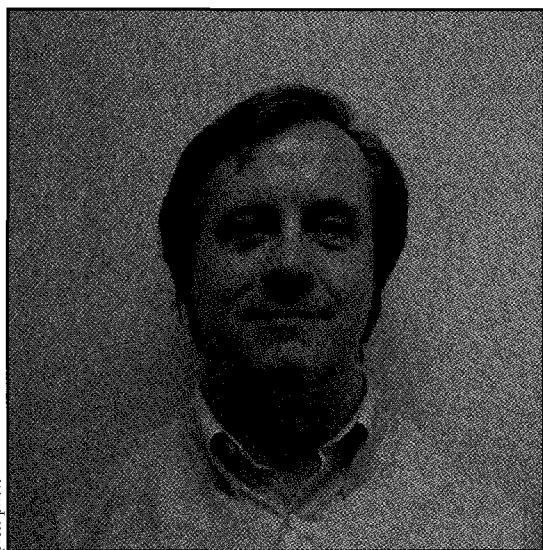
For those of us outside of manufacturing, those statistics should be evidence enough that, in general, what's good for our neighbors who are small manufacturers is good for the rest of us. But what about two local small manufacturers who are competing for the same types of contracts? If Company A cannot, for whatever reason, accept a certain contract, should he let the customer go to a different company outside of the region, or is he better off recommending that the customer consider giving the contract to local Company B?

If you accept the idea of economic individualism, the answer is not necessarily obvious, but John Oller, the executive director and CEO of the Manufacturers' Alliance of the Rock River Valley (MARRV), is trying to convince local small manufacturers that cooperation can work to the benefit of both Company B and Company A—and he's increasingly succeeding. By keeping contracts—and jobs—in the area, Rockford as a whole becomes a more attractive manufacturing destination for outside customers, and the economic opportunities increase for everyone here. As I've noted before, this sounds



like an idea straight out of a Frank Capra movie; more importantly, though, it's an implicit acknowledgment that there are things in life that are more important than your own economic bottom line. And it's a revival of an older ethic that used to characterize the actions of small manufacturers: the recognition that doing good for its own sake is likely to benefit you—even economically—in the long run.

MARRV got its start two years ago, inspired, in part, by a speech that Tino Oldani, the new CEO of the revived Ingersoll Milling Machine Company, gave at the Rockford Area Chamber of Commerce's Manufacturers Appreciation Dinner. Oldani is a native of northern Italy, but he sounded like a true Rockford patriot. Under his leadership, he pledged, Ingersoll will concentrate on those things that it can do well; when it has to go outside of the company for parts or to fulfill a contract, it will turn first to other manufacturers in Rockford before looking outside of the city. (Significantly, he didn't mention price as a factor in this decision, leaving the impression that giving business to fellow Rockfordians was more important than finding the lowest price.) He decried the current corporate obsession with short-term profits and urged Rockford's small manufacturers to take advantage of large corporations' interest in outsourcing to bring jobs to Rockford, rather than letting them go to Mexico or China. He spoke bluntly about the challenges facing manufacturing in Rockford—a poor educational system, with career advisors who tell students that manufacturing is a “risky” field; local banks that will happily lend money for mortgages and car loans but refuse even to consider capital loans to manufacturers—but he also discussed Rockford's strengths, which include one of the highest concentrations of small manufacturers in the country. (In 2004,



John Oller, executive director of MARRV.

there were 951 manufacturers inside the city limits of Rockford. That's about one manufacturer for every 40 acres.)

This concentration represents the best hope for Rockford's economic future, and Oldani encouraged local manufacturers to emulate a common Italian business practice by creating a Rockford-area manufacturers consortium, which, to the outside world, would function as a single company for the purpose of bidding on contracts. While, in his vision, Oldani saw no need for a separate organization, U.S. law governing business is, as John Oller points out, more restrictive than European law. While national politicians and multinational corporations focus on free trade beyond our borders, the freedom for small manufacturers to adopt creative business measures inside the United States is heavily curtailed.

Thus the need for MARRV, a separate nonprofit organization that can fulfill many of the functions of a manufacturing consortium by coordinating the efforts of local manufacturers, both members and nonmembers, and providing a single point of contact for customers interested in sending contracts to the Rockford area. Funded initially through \$350,000 in grants from federal and local governments, MARRV hit the ground running last August with the hiring of Oller, an engineer by training who has experience in management as well.

The most immediate problem that Oller faced was a change for the better in the regional economy. As Theresa Beach-Shelow, chairman of the board of MARRV and one of the chief forces behind its creation, points out, "MARRV

was conceived in a recession, but born in a recovery." Local manufacturers who had been struggling to make ends meet suddenly found themselves with enough work to keep them busy, which made it harder for them to see an immediate need for the organization. When Oller was hired, MARRV had 40 members (each of whom pays a nominal fee of \$500 per year); today, it has 63—a slower rate of growth than Oller had desired. In two years, he hopes to have 300 members.

On the other hand, the recovery has helped Oller drive home another point: MARRV isn't simply about bringing contracts to the Rockford area; it's about helping local manufacturers find local sources for their own needs, to the benefit of the local economy. "Everyone is so busy that they don't know who their neighbors are," Oller says. MARRV is "helping the region refind itself."

While customers from outside the region are often unaware of the capabilities of local manufacturers, local manufacturers themselves sometimes do not know that they have neighbors (literally, in some cases) who can fill contracts that they have previously sent out of state. "There's a lot more capability here than anyone realizes," Oller says. "You just have to find it." To that end, the organization is in the process of compiling a database of all manufacturers in the four counties surrounding Rockford—some-where over 1,300 companies. Eventually, the database will include detailed information on each company's capabilities, so that customers can approach MARRV with projects that no single manufacturer in the area may be able to complete, and MARRV can put together a bid on the project by bringing together the appropriate mix of local companies.

So far, MARRV has quoted 122 projects, of which 26 are still open. Of the rest, MARRV has won 49 and lost 47. The value of the projects is lopsided in the other direction: The total value of projects won is \$69,030; of projects lost, \$3.5 million. The figures, however, mask an important trend: MARRV has been winning an increasing number of projects (indeed, in July, MARRV quoted ten projects and won them all) and, in so doing, is proving the viability of the concept to outside customers, who then give MARRV the opportunity to quote larger projects. Just as importantly, these successes pique the interest of local manufacturers. (It took six months for MARRV to get a contract from Oldani's Ingersoll, but Ingersoll now

plans to send more MARRV's way.)

MARRV does not require a company to be a member in order to get a piece of the action. If a project comes in and a nonmember manufacturer is suited for the job, MARRV approaches the company, and, "if they win, we ask them to join." In that sense, MARRV may have advantages that a for-profit manufacturing consortium would not. And it may represent a greater opportunity to transform the local economy. There's no practical reason why every one of those 1,300-plus local manufacturers could not be a member of MARRV. And the model being established by MARRV could be replicated in similar regions around the country.

Oller is realistic about the long-term prospects for American manufacturing. Companies that aren't willing to transform to meet current needs are at risk, and those who haven't invested gradually in new equipment are going to find it very hard to be able to afford to update all at once. Because of that, a current start-up may have an easier row to hoe than a century-old company that has put off capital improvement just to survive. But MARRV can help there, too, through training programs and by directing appropriate work to manufacturers with older equipment in order to give them a chance to modernize. In that sense, MARRV can function like a large-scale version of a family business, dividing responsibilities among members according to their abilities while helping them all to get ahead.

Time and again, Oller draws back from the kinds of economic "truisms" that Wall Street and Washington take for granted. "Big company rules and tools just don't work for small companies," he argues. "Lower cost isn't always the answer; a lot of times, it's the value. A lot of our shops have adjusted from higher volume to custom shops" that provide expertise which simply cannot be found in low-wage foreign markets. That requires workers who have a solid education, and MARRV has been working with the Rockford School District and local colleges and universities to get students interested once again in the opportunities that skilled manufacturing provides.

Ultimately, the survival of American manufacturing will depend on more than economics. "We're changing the culture in a region," Oller says. "That's no easy task."

Indeed. If the progress that has been made in its first year is any indication, however, MARRV is up to the challenge. ◀

Letter From Texas

by Wayne Allensworth

A Broad Path to Destruction

Public and private interests are joining forces to build a massive transportation "corridor" through the middle of Texas—threatening property rights, wildlife, and the historic landscape of the Lone Star State. The Trans-Texas Corridor (TTC) would be the initial U.S. portion of a complex of highways and rail lines from the interior of Mexico to the Great White North that would eventually cut a huge path through the Plains states and Upper Midwest before following on to cities in Canada.

While Texas officials were beginning to plan and choose routes for the TTC project, Evan Moore of the *Bosque County News* wrote that "two powerful if little known groups" are watching "from afar": the Security and Prosperity Partnership of North America (headed by President George W. Bush, Mexico's outgoing president Vicente Fox, and Canadian Prime Minister Stephen Harper) and something called the North American Super-Corridor Coalition (NASCO). Alongside these groups stand the North Central Texas Council of Governments and Ross Perot, Jr.'s Alliance Airport, a North Texas inland port. As Mr. Moore noted, these powerful interest groups are not playing a public role in the development of the TTC, but their influence will be significant nonetheless.

As planned by the Texas Department of Transportation (TDOT), the TTC will be routed roughly parallel to I-35, with a branch line through East Texas. The TTC-35 route would be some 1,200 feet wide, including a toll road to be built and leased by a Spanish firm, Cintra-Zachry (which currently operates the Indiana Toll Road and Chicago's Skyway). The corridor would be a network of highways, railways, and utility right of ways, with separate lanes for passenger vehicles and trucks. The TTC would have six rail lines, including lines for passenger and freight transportation. It would include a 200-foot-wide utility zone.

In April, TDOT released a map of a "narrowed" area ten-miles wide, revealing the parameters of a TTC development zone, which may be targeted for condemnation by the state. The state would then lease the land to Cintra, as well as to other private developers, who have piled on contributions to key political figures, including Texas Gov. Rick Perry. According to anti-TTC groups, possible corridor paths include over 1.5 million acres of farm and ranch land; one million residents; three aquifers; 8,000 acres of park land; and more than 100 acres of historic sites.

The plans for the TTC and the connections among the interest groups behind it and the politicians backing it have been obscured from public view. The private interests who would profit from this massive boondoggle have produced "studies" allegedly showing the need for the "supercorridor." As information about the plans has seeped out, however, public resistance is mounting.

In July, TDOT began holding hearings across Central Texas on the TTC plans, and TDOT officials were greeted by an angry public. As of July, 30 counties, 12 cities, 8 utilities organizations, and 4 school districts have passed resolutions condemning the TTC, according to the Blackland Coalition, a group dedicated to combating the supercorridor. One of the proposed TTC routes would destroy about 5,800 acres in Bosque County alone. County Judge Cole Word told the *Clifton Record*, "Our court represents probably close to five hundred years of family values in this county . . . You have the Smiths and the Words and the Schmidts and the Koonsmans," whose families have been in Bosque County since the 1800's. "This is who we are," explained the judge, "[and] where we're from. We've stayed here to raise our families just like our predecessors, and we want to continue that."

According to Judge Word, an "alternative" TTC route would enter Bosque County on the path of the old Chisholm Trail, obliterating a piece of Texan—and American—folklore as vital as the Alamo. The Texas Farm Bureau opposes the TTC, and TFB Secretary-Treasurer Albert Thompson has noted that the TTC would devastate rural communities, endanger wildlife, and consume 146 acres

of Texas land for every road mile.

What is at stake, however, is even larger than that. Jerome Corsi, writing in *Human Events*, has connected the dots. Corsi has dubbed the supercorridor a "NAFTA Super Highway" that will be an important part of a larger plan to integrate the United States with Mexico and Canada into a North American Union. He argues that the transportation system will help to move goods produced in the Far East to the American heartland and on to Canada. To make this a reality, U.S. border posts must be "reduced to an electronic speed bump" for the Mexican trucks delivering the goods. The Bush administration cannot secure the borders if it is trying to "create express lanes for Mexican trucks to bring containers with cheap Far East goods into the heart of the U.S."

Which brings us back to the Security and Prosperity Partnership of North America (SPP). Following the SPP's creation in March 2005, the Council on Foreign Relations released a set of recommendations made by an "independent" task force on further development of the SPP, including

the creation by 2010 of a North American community to enhance security, prosperity, and opportunity. We propose a community based on the principle affirmed in the March 2005 Joint Statement of the three leaders that "our security and prosperity are mutually dependent and complementary." Its boundaries will be defined by a common external tariff and an outer security perimeter within which the movement of people, products, and capital will be legal, orderly and safe. Its goal will be to guarantee a free, secure, just, and prosperous North America.

The statement elaborated on the open-borders aspect of the plan:

The three governments should commit themselves to the long-term goal of dramatically diminishing the need for the current intensity of the governments' physical control of cross-border traffic, travel, and trade within North

America. A long-term goal for a North American border action plan should be joint screening of travelers from third countries at their first point of entry into North America and the elimination of most controls over the temporary movement of these travelers within North America.

In recent years, the globalist elites in Europe and the Americas have sought to erase borders and immigration controls as a means of facilitating the movement of money, factories, and labor, maximizing the profits of their corporate sponsors. Small wonder, then, that they have refused to take serious steps to control immigration, combat radical Islam (which would mean curtailing immigration and travel from Islamic states—so there could be no thought of “diminishing the need for the current intensity of governments’ physical control of cross-border traffic, travel, and trade”), and prevent the de-industrialization of their countries. It also makes sense, then, that even “conservative” U.S. politicians have embraced multiculturalism and the demographic, religious, and linguistic transformation of America.

The battle over the TTC is just a foretaste of what is coming as the citizens of Texas and the United States are faced with losing any control over their fate and the fate of their children. Since moving back to my native state five years ago, I’ve been stunned and saddened by the

amount of destruction I see around me. Every inch of Texas soil that is paved over, every acre of prairie and plain lost, every family driven off their land represents the slow death of something I love very much. The land, the people, the tall tales, the history are all part of a whole. Should the globalist traitors have their way, America’s population will explode, and the destruction will continue. Texas—and America—will exist in name only. Judging by the backlash the TTC has provoked, I know I am not alone.

Wayne Allensworth lives in Keller, Texas.

Letter From Greece

by Makis Voridis

The Right Illusion



For the last two years, the New Democracy Party has held power in Greece, following 23 years of almost continuous rule by the Panhellenic Socialist Movement (PASOK). The general impression abroad is that New Democracy is a conservative party, the Greek equivalent of the Christian Democrats in Germany or the Republican Party in the United States. This impression is reinforced by its participation in the international conservative European People’s Party

(EPP) and its political conflict with PASOK. However, a more careful analysis of Greek political realities leads to a different conclusion.

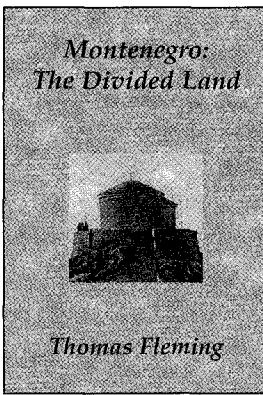
In a January 8, 2004, television interview, the president of New Democracy, Greek Prime Minister Constantinos Karamanlis, declared that “there is no disagreement between New Democracy and PASOK in foreign-policy strategy.” This statement is, in fact, proved by a comparison of the two parties’ positions.

New Democracy, as opposed to the EPP and the Church of Greece, supports the accession of Turkey to the European Union. If this ultimately does take place, Greece and the rest of Europe will be deluged with millions of Turkish Muslims bearing European passports, a demographic nightmare that will mean the end of Europe as we know it. Far from cautioning against such an outcome, New Democracy actually acted as a mediator in support of Recep Tayyip Erdogan’s request for Turkey’s ruling Islamic Justice and Development Party to become a member of the EPP.

The February 8, 2005, statement of Mrs. Psarouda-Benaki, chairman of the Hellenic Parliament, is typical of New Democracy’s attitude toward the European Union: “[T]he national borders and a part of national sovereignty will be limited for the sake of peace, prosperity and security in the enlarged Europe.” Together with PASOK, New Democracy rushed approval of the E.U. constitution, which lacks any mention of the Christian cultural character of Europe and transfers more power from the nation-states to Brussels, through the Hellenic Parliament, without a referendum. At the beginning, Greeks were divided on the E.U. constitution (44.57 percent for, 38.85 percent against), but, after France and the Netherlands rejected it, Greek public opinion shifted (only 34 percent for, with 53.6 percent against, according to Greek news website *In.gr*).

New Democracy was one of the few European conservative parties in the Council of Europe to vote against the memorandum condemning the crimes of communism. At the recent EPP convention in Rome, Mr. Karamanlis delayed his entrance to the meeting room so as to avoid sitting next to the host, then Italian Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi, whom Karamanlis considers very conservative.

In 2005, New Democracy offered an amnesty to all illegal immigrants in Greece, without conducting a study of



**Montenegro:
The Divided Land**

Thomas Fleming

This Time, Be Prepared

The Serb land of Montenegro is once again at the crossroads of history. The blood-soaked mountains and dramatic coastline of this small land have been fought over by Illyrians, Macedonians, Romans, Byzantines, Turks, and Venetians, and, in the 20th century, by the armies of Austria-Hungary, Italy, and Germany. In World War II, Montenegro lost more men, per capita, than any nation of Europe, and now it is the latest target of the so-called international community, which has tried to create a phony separatist movement (complete with a bogus national church) to continue the disastrous policies that have involved the United States in wars over Bosnia and Kosovo.

Thomas Fleming has written the first well-researched history of Montenegro in the English language, taking the story from ancient times all the way up to the current crisis over separation from Serbia. This is no dry academic tome but a lively account of a brave people whose brave history rivals the tales of Leonidas and his Spartans at Thermopylae.

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the impact of the large number of these foreigners on Greek society. This amnesty joins PASOK's previous amnesties of 1999 and 2001. The issue has taken on explosive social dimensions: Greece now has the largest proportion of immigrants (ten percent) of any member of the European Union, and many urban Greek neighborhoods have been transformed into ghettos. Ignoring this reality, Interior Minister Pavlopoulos stated in Parliament that "immigration contributes to the economic development, the social progress and the fertilization of civilization" and supports an amnesty "of all illegal immigrants." The fact that Greek law requires the deportation of illegal immigrants matters little to the New Democracy government.

New Democracy's lack of any real conservative foundation is evident in the party's affinity for the Marxist left. When asked by *Diavazo* magazine to list his reading preferences, Prime Minister Karamanlis replied that "he reads with persistence and patience the leftist intellectuals, such as Marx." The historical worldview of New Democracy is unashamedly anticonservative: It honors those who struggled for the establishment of a communist dictatorship in Greece.



Greek Prime Minister Karamanlis and Turkish Prime Minister Erdogan share the stage.

During his visit to the island of Agios Eustratios, to which communists were deported during the Greek Civil War, Mr. Karamanlis paid homage "to the citizens who were persecuted and suffered at this place" and pledged to secure 440,000 euros to transform the place into a "Museum of Democracy."

The notion that New Democracy is conservative is an illusion in the minds of

those who cannot or will not face reality. By international standards, New Democracy is a center-left party. Those interested in preserving the Christian values of the nation and the Greek tradition should look elsewhere for a standard bearer.

Makis Voridis is a member of the executive committee of the People's Orthodox Rally in Greece.

THE CONSERVATIVE BOOKSHELF

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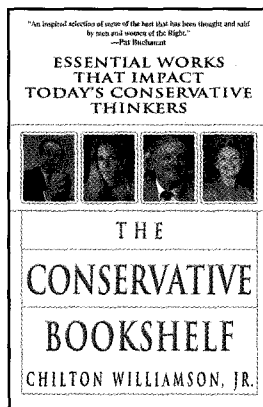
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Of Chance and Memory

Coincidence is the smile of luck, but it is also the laughter of misfortune. A smile is singular, rather like tears; it appears meaningful insofar as it seems to have a precipitant cause. Laughter, by contrast, is repetitive and mechanical; automatons may laugh, but they can scarcely be imagined smiling. Thus, hysterical laughter is common enough, while collective laughter—from kindergarten to the circus and the cinema—is the mother's milk of a commercial civilization, which raises taxes and sells tickets to make it flow. A smile may be forced or feigned, but it is always the product of an individual consciousness.

Something similar is observable in the workings of fate. When all is well, and one is feeling lucky, one tends to believe in the existence of a single benevolent influence over one's life, whose unseen, though deeply reasoned, volition stacks the deck in one's favor and produces the right card at just the right moment. Then a Dickens character runs smack into another Dickens character. Then the woman in Stendhal drops her glove, or the man with prickly whiskers picks up the handkerchief. Then the idiot beloved of Dostoyevsky inherits a million rubles.

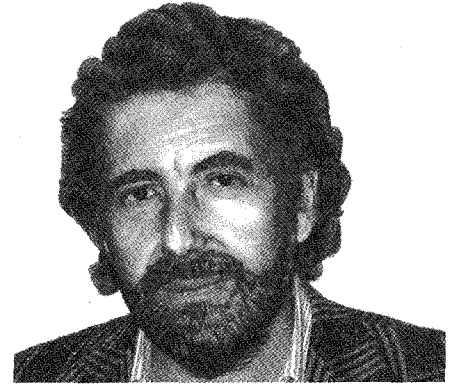
But when fortune turns, *deus* withdraws into the *machina*. At once, one feels oneself at the mercy of a vast chord of influences, varying in pitch from indifferent to malefic, and the ensuing cacophonous din has something of primitive polytheism about it. The gods are against you, or at least not for you, collectively, like a film audience that has turned on the guy in the brown hat for no apparent reason whatsoever. One feels one is being lynched by a posse of square-jawed deities to derisive shouts of encouragement from an invisible mob of drunken townspeople. Then the scene is straight out of Dürrenmatt. Then the ambience is the horrors of *The Iliad*, veined through with barbarous laughter known as Homeric. Then the idiot does not inherit, the lover looks away just as the glove falls to the floor, and the right card comes too late in the game to be of any use to the gambler.

To be sure, individuals with a decidedly poetic, as well as fantastic, cast of mind are particularly sensitive to the sea change, and not only because such peo-

ple tend to have ample time on their idle hands. The nausea of superstition takes hold of them sooner, and keeps them in its grip longer, than it does their unexceptional fellows. For superstition—which is to say the lacerating awareness of the multitude of abstract deities and quotidian details, of heavenly omens and earthly signs—is akin to metaphor, in that both are compulsively deductive. Both compare effects and juxtapose causes while thrusting one man's consciousness into the center of the universe with an alacrity that the average person would think maniacal. The average person does not believe that the cosmos is addressing him in the voice of spring rain, or that tonight of all nights the stars are shining solely for the pleasure of his beloved. In the most extreme case, the poet's mind—in this, as in so much else, like the idiot's, the lover's, or the gambler's mind—evolves into a kind of giant parabolic mirror, focusing these projections into a death ray trained on itself, as in the early Soviet science-fiction classic *Engineer Garin's Hyperbolid*. The ensuing fusion of the visionary and the victim is a commonplace of Romantic literature.

There is another psychological tendency, besides a particular person's hypersensitivity to coincidence, that brings superstition to the fore, and this one is almost universally human. It is that the consequences of our choices, which we remark with the passing of days, months, and even years, are rarely other than complex, ambiguous, and incomplete—so much so that, little by little, alone with our thoughts in the black-velvet bag that is the fullness of time, we come to disremember that the choices in question were our own to begin with, that they were quite specific and often premeditated, and that the enormous ball of tangled thread in the bag once had a beginning. In this, sadly, life is unlike a game of hazard, for, in a hand of poker or in a spin of the wheel, the consequences of a decision are revealed promptly and unequivocally.

All this is fertile ground for superstition, as life itself seems intent on uncoupling obscured causes from tangled effects with the crocheting hook of mem-



ory. Unable to follow the thread back to the beginning, one is eager to grasp at signs and omens, which are plentiful and of the moment. A similar tendency is at work in the collective consciousness of nations, whose evasive or inconsequent chronicle is called *history*. It is not until the disastrous results of a nation's policy—say, Chamberlain's in the 1930's—become apparent that the tide of public opinion turns against it, despite the fact that the policy in question is universally understood to have been formulated with the fullest consent of the people. Then a nation grasps at fresh auguries—such as the dynamism of Churchill's voice over the wireless, or the paternal in Stalin's physiognomy—and bundles up new contradictions with existing ones, often with consequences just as disastrous in the long term. For who, in retrospect, can say with conviction that, in the war between two totalitarian villains then in the offing, Western democracies acted responsibly in allying themselves with the stronger and shrewder against the weaker and noisier? Or that their eventual bet on red was not ultimately a random choice, the product of a haphazard decision, an accident of so many parts that nobody to this day knows the full truth about it?

Like the macrocosm of our shared history, every one of us is a confused lifelong dream of half-suppressed, half-evaded contradictions, which memory, far from confronting or resolving, uses everything in its power to tangle up all the more, giving shape or substance to whatever had none by means of one intricate fallacy and leveling what there was by means of another. Mnemosyne is the muse of botched treatment, leaving every patient she nurses a mass of open sores and suppurating wounds, and no sooner do old ones begin to heal at her touch than new ones start festering.

by Srdja Trifkovic

A Turbulent Layman

If you did not know beforehand that Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad was one of the most important men in the most neuralgic region of the world—and, by extension, in the world itself—you'd never have guessed it. One of the few things he has in common with President George W. Bush is a forgettable face. In both cases, the bland façade conceals men of simple but deep convictions with a millenarian streak. Both believe that their actions are divinely guided and that they are personally assisting history's linear progression to a grand eschatological finale.

Their practical objectives are fundamentally different, however, and make a direct clash between them hard to avoid.

For all his lapses into utopian kitsch—democratizing the Middle East, leaving no child behind, *etc.*—in world affairs, Mr. Bush is, by now, a *status quo* politician. Like Asquith's Liberals before 1914, or Brezhnev's successors a quarter of a century ago, he pays lip service to the buzz of a changing world while knowing that any real change would entail the weakening of his country's relative power. Mr. Bush would like to return to the international order as it had been in the years immediately preceding September 11: a unipolar system justified by the neoliberal ideology of democracy, human rights, and free markets, in which America could respond to any conceivable challenge to her "leadership" with a prompt projection of raw power. Since that is no longer possible, and given the absence of a realist doctrine that would offer a reliable match between this country's interests and her capabilities, the best he can hope for is to manage threats and challenges as they come, *ad hoc* and day to day.

The impossibility, futility, and underlying iniquity of the neoconservative "vision" have been elaborated in these pages for some years. The speed with which the project has unraveled, a mere decade since William Kristol and Robert Kagan memorably exulted in "our" (*i.e.*, their) benevolent global hegemony, is nevertheless remarkable. China and Russia today, with India soon to follow, assert and defend their interests in the manner that the late Deng Xiaoping and former Russian president Boris Yeltsin would have

deemed far too bold. Lesser detractors are growing ever more numerous. They are often hostile, unpredictable, and difficult to deal with, from Kim Jong Il and Hugo Chavez to the reborn Taliban and the insurgents in Iraq.

Mr. Ahmadinejad, *stricto sensu*, is a "lesser detractor," but he presents a formidable challenge to Mr. Bush. He is a sworn enemy of the *status quo* and leads a country bigger and more populous than Britain, France, or Italy. He has several other trumps up his sleeve: oil; an advanced nuclear program; Hezbollah; a growing popularity in the Muslim world; considerable influence over Shiites in Iraq and elsewhere in the region; and a unifying ideology based on the legacy of Ayatollah Khomeini.

The most important Iranian asset, by far, is oil. The country is a major producer capable of affecting the price of crude with its own policies and, *in extremis*, shutting off its production altogether and crippling that of its neighbors across the Gulf—Saudi Arabia, the Emirates, Kuwait—which could trigger a global economic meltdown. Iran is currently exporting over 2.4 million barrels of crude oil each day, and her earnings are projected to hit \$54 billion this year. Such enormous revenues enable Iran to do all that she does to enhance her power and standing.

The most expensive of those activities, and the most worrisome for the rest of the world, is Iran's nuclear program. Ahmadinejad came to power in June of last year promising to defy the world on this issue, and he is successfully resisting all demands for the establishment of international control over his nuclear assets. But while he continues to claim that the purpose of his country's program is peaceful, the Europeans, and even Russia and China—Iran's key trading partners long willing to give her the benefit of the doubt—are having second thoughts. They joined Britain, France, and the United States in approving a U.N. Security Council resolution on July 31 demanding that Tehran suspend its enrichment and reprocessing of nuclear fuel by August 31 or face the threat of economic and diplomatic sanctions. That was the first time that the inter-



national body has legally required Iran to halt her enrichment of uranium. Ahmadinejad promptly rejected the resolution, however, and his top nuclear negotiator, Ali Larijani, declared that Iran's nuclear activities would be expanded rather than curtailed. The planned expansion "includes all nuclear technology including the string of centrifuges," he said, referring to a battery of uranium-enrichment facilities that is scheduled to be installed at the main plant in the city of Natanz. Depending on the level of enrichment, treated uranium can be used to generate electricity or to build nuclear weapons.

That Ahmadinejad intends to pursue the latter option is not only possible but, in the opinion of intelligence analysts and International Atomic Energy Agency experts, increasingly probable. While it is reasonable for Iran to build nuclear reactors to free up oil for export, Ahmadinejad's insistence on Iran making her own nuclear fuel to power the reactors makes no economic sense. Fresh fuel for the reactors is available cheaply and reliably on the open market, notably from Russia, while the nuclear technology Iran is trying to master is very expensive. But from his point of view, nuclear weapons make sense as the ultimate deterrent against any future "Operation Iranian Freedom," especially with U.S. forces present on his borders to the west (Iraq) and northeast (Afghanistan). In addition, their possession would be a powerful means of asserting Iran's claim to be the most important power in the region.

Even if allowed to proceed with his nuclear program unhindered, Ahmadinejad will need at least seven—and, more likely, ten—years to build his first device. For an immediate means of applying calibrated violence in pursuit of limited political objectives, he can rely on the services of Hezbollah.

While it would be simplistic to treat the "Party of God" as a direct extension of Iran's global network, Hezbollah's relationship to Tehran may be compared to that of Angola's or Mozambique's "national liberation movements" of the 1970's to Cuba, or Cuba's to the Soviet Union. Hezbollah is autonomous, but it is not independent. Its unexpected attacks on Israeli targets inside Israel on July 12 that triggered a major international crisis would not have taken place had the leaders in Tehran not wanted them to happen. Iran's likely purpose was to help divert attention from the nuclear issue and to demonstrate her growing influence in the region. Tehran has basked in Hezbollah's ability to defy the Israeli army and claimed credit for the crisis that has weakened Iran's traditional regional rivals, while formally denying any direct involvement.

The Arab world is aware of the connection between Iran and Hezbollah, and it is uncomfortable with the implications. Its ambivalence may be gleaned from the reaction of several key Arab governments—notably that of Saudi Arabia—to the mayhem in Lebanon. While condemning Israeli attacks on civilian targets, Riyadh also expressed disapproval of the "irresponsible" attacks that had invited such disproportionate retaliation. Even the 22-nation Arab League has criticized Hezbollah. This does not mean that the Arabs have suddenly softened in their view of the "Zionist entity," but the League's condemnation of Hezbollah for "unexpected, inappropriate and irresponsible acts" was clearly aimed at Iran. It was the first time that the Arab world has criticized any Muslim entity attacking Israel, and it reflects the latent tension between Shiite and Sunni Muslims on a wider scale.

The difference between Riyadh and Tehran may be compared to that between Stalin and Trotsky 70 years ago. The Saudis are reminiscent of the Soviets during the Cold War: They are oppressively conservative at home, while following a dual-track policy abroad. On the one hand, they behave as a "normal" state that feigns regular relations with its Western partners, while, on the other, they are surreptitiously exporting hard-line cadres and financing fifth columnists and fellow travelers in order to subvert "the World of War."

Ahmadinejad, by contrast, acts in a manner reminiscent of the Soviet state in its early years. He favors direct action in pursuit of a permanent Islamic revolution. In the short-to-medium term, he wants to

establish a Shiite-dominated domain in the region that would extend to the Mediterranean in the West. The size of the Shiite population outside Iran provides him with a powerful constituency. They constitute an absolute majority in the Gulf region, over two thirds in Iraq, the plurality in Lebanon, and they feel emboldened by the events of recent years.

The most momentous event of the decade was the fall of Saddam Hussein. Effected by American military might and paid mainly in American blood and treasure, the removal of Iran's archenemy is widely perceived in the Middle East as a free gift to Iraq's Shiites that has changed the regional equation in favor of Tehran. Ahmadinejad's friends now control the Iraqi government; in the case of Iraq's interior ministry, his proxies do so directly.

The people who run Iraq with the blessing of the Bush administration are temperamentally and ideologically not very different from their coreligionists in Lebanon who are condemned in Washington as terrorists. Iraq's prime minister Nouri al-Maliki fiercely condemned the Israeli action in Lebanon, using language harsher than that of any other Arab leader. During a subsequent visit to Washington, he embarrassed his hosts by calling for an immediate cease-fire and refraining from any criticism of Hezbollah. Iraqi Vice President Adel Abdul-Mahdi accused Israel of carrying out "massacres." Top Shiite spiritual leader—arguably the most powerful man in the country—Grand Ayatollah Ali al-Sistani went even further by warning that "Islamic nations will not forgive the entities that hinder a cease-fire," which was a clear reference to the United States.

Some advocates of the war in Iraq had argued that the fall of Saddam would bring to power in Baghdad a government not only more friendly to the United States but less hostile to Israel, and perhaps willing to act as a catalyst of changing attitudes in the Arab world. The crisis in Lebanon has shown the futility of such hopes. In their hostility to Israel and *de facto* support for Hezbollah, Iraqi politicians are asserting their distance from Washington more boldly than at any time in the past three years. Ironically, this is one of the few issues on which the lead-

ers of Iraq's three national communities express full agreement. Sunnis have also condemned the Israeli action, and even the Kurds, usually considered America's sole reliable partners in the country, have joined the chorus, with President Jalal Talabani expressing his "extreme anger and sorrow."

In the aftermath of the crisis in Lebanon, Iraq is seen more clearly than before as Ahmadinejad's insurance policy against any action Mr. Bush may contemplate against him. The country has been an American quagmire for some time, but if the Shiite majority were to end its cooperation with the occupation authority, the situation would become utterly unmanageable. In view of Hezbollah's performance in Lebanon, the United States should entertain no illusions about Iran's ability to use her regional proxies boldly and effectively.

The events of the summer of 2006 have increased Iran's regional stature and Ahmadinejad's personal prestige, while diminishing American influence in the Middle East and making hostility to Israel probably more universal and intense than at any other time since 1948. Hezbollah's ability to avoid annihilation by Israel indicates the limits of conventional military power. Furthermore, as one Arab analyst has noted, the Iran-Hezbollah axis has hijacked the Palestinian cause and redefined the Arab-Israeli conflict to the point where it is evident that it is "Iran's and not Washington's traditional allies in the region that hold the key to solving the crisis."

Mahmoud Ahmadinejad's current objective is to convince George W. Bush that regional stability is impossible without his acquiescence, and that the cost of trying to isolate and intimidate Iran may prove prohibitive. Theoretically, it would be in the American interest to give Iran a vested interest in a new regional-stability framework. The problem is that a bullish, increasingly self-confident Mr. Ahmadinejad would demand a price for his stake in the project that Mr. Bush cannot and will not pay. The problem is real, and it remains insoluble for as long as America remains a direct and therefore vulnerable participant in the affairs of the Middle East. ☞

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THE COURTS

Who Pays the
"Tort Tax"?

by Stephen B. Presser

The United States, of all Western legal systems, is probably the harshest on manufacturers, at least insofar as they can be held liable for millions or even billions of dollars in damages for unanticipated defects in their products. Until about the middle of the 20th century, liability standards in this country were not significantly different from those of England or Europe. Manufacturers could not be held liable in litigation by those who suffered harm from using their products if the manufacturers exercised due care in the preparation of those products. If, for example, reasonable practice in an industry was to pull every tenth widget off the line and inspect it for defects, the manufacturer would not be liable if, somehow, one of the unexamined widgets had defects that later caused harm. This is called the negligence standard, and it still governs in other areas of tort law (the law of responsibility for damages caused to strangers). Further, at least until the early 20th century, negligent manufacturers, with a few exceptions, had no liability to anyone but the immediate purchasers of their products. For example, if an automobile manufacturer sold to a dealer, a consumer who had purchased a lemon could only recover from the dealer.

By the mid-1960's, all of that had changed. Under the new standard (pioneered in the courts of California, a source of much mischief in American torts jurisprudence), a manufacturer was held liable to end users or even to bystanders if any product left the factory in an unreasonably dangerous condition. This was referred to as "absolute" or "strict" liability, because, even if the manufacturer had followed industry standards, there might still be liability. The result was a plethora of product-liability suits—a litigation explosion. Though European and other jurisdictions are now flirting with strict or absolute product liability, for many years, while

American manufacturers were being hit with such lawsuits, foreign manufacturers were subject only to the negligence standard, which put American manufacturers at something of a disadvantage.

There are additional advantages to being a manufacturer in a European or a South American or an Asian country. Outside of America, the risk of catastrophic legal expenses for manufacturers is greatly reduced, because most jurisdictions do not permit punitive damages (damages assessed in an amount far beyond those necessary to compensate for the harm caused, presumably to deter future misconduct). It was the punitive-damage element that caused the infamous four-million-dollar judgment for the mildly defective paint job on a BMW and the three-million-dollar verdict for the lady who burned herself when she unwisely removed the lid from her McDonald's coffee cup after leaving the drive-thru window. Most foreign jurisdictions use judges rather than capricious juries to find facts and calculate damages. Most, if not all, do not permit contingency fees whereby plaintiffs pay nothing to their lawyers if the lawsuit is unsuccessful. (Contingency fees, by lowering the costs to plaintiffs who litigate, result in more lawsuits.) In many other countries, plaintiffs who lose must pay the legal expenses of the defendants, including the massive lawyers' fees they will have incurred. In our system, however, the losing plaintiffs are not liable for such costs. Finally, most of these outside jurisdictions do not permit the extensive pretrial "discovery" procedures whereby litigants badger each other through interrogatories (written questions that must be answered), subpoenas for documents (which can call for the provision of written records that may be extremely expensive and time-consuming to produce), and depositions for weeks, months, or years before the trial itself takes place. Often, these discovery procedures are so costly that many defendants will settle cases on terms favorable to plaintiffs rather than submit to discovery or go to trial. In short, plaintiffs are at a great advantage in American courts, and manufacturing defendants are at a great risk.

The precise nature and costs of that advantage are subject to debate. Critics of the American system claim that, because of the current state of product-liability litigation, the cost of producing goods in

America—which are eventually passed on to the consumer—include a tort tax of between \$200 and \$300 billion per year or, according to one estimate for 2004, \$845 per year for each American. That roughly translates into a five-percent tax on wages for the average American worker. Indeed, because of the potential for product-liability suits, some entire American industries, such as that involving single-engine aircraft, have nearly collapsed. Still, defenders of our system (especially plaintiffs' lawyers who have reaped windfalls from suits against tobacco, asbestos, and drug companies in which massive punitive damages have been assessed—contingency-fee lawyers characteristically receive from 20 to 40 percent of any settlement or damages) and their colleagues in the legal academy (in which there has been a traditional hostility toward corporations) are sanguine. They claim that whatever costs have accrued to the economy from litigation have been offset by cost savings flowing from improved product safety and other benign offshoots of litigation and that, in any event, whatever "tort tax" is out there does not seem to have interfered with the high productivity and profits of recent years.

Defenders of the tort tax believe that those who advocate civil-justice reform (including a reduction in punitive damages, elimination of contingency fees, reduced discovery, and other means of discouraging litigation) are simply, as one economist recently declared, following an "ideology that is consistent with their philosophy that when it comes to corporations, anything goes." Not surprisingly, those who seek civil-justice reform and favor a reduction of the "tort tax" accuse the trial lawyers and their academic fellow travelers of malevolent hostility to American manufacturers, and of fostering the redistribution of wealth from corporations to plaintiffs and their lawyers. Indeed, in many of these product-liability lawsuits, only the lawyers benefit, since the plaintiffs (who may include a class comprising millions of users of allegedly defective products) may recover only coupons good for their next purchase from the manufacturer in question—coupons that are almost never redeemed.

Litigation is big business in our country. We have more lawyers as a percentage of our population than most, if not all,

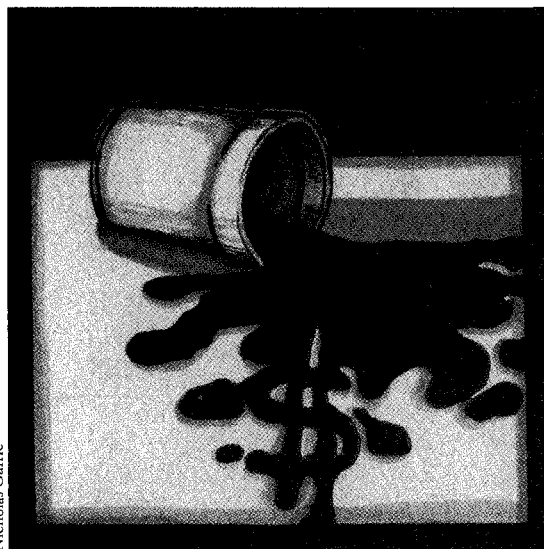
other nations, and the costs incurred in litigation make up a greater percentage of our economy than of anyone else's. It has been estimated that, in the United States, tort costs are two percent of GNP—a figure twice as high as that of Japan and three times as high as Britain's.

Perhaps the only things that are certain about our torts system are that it costs a lot; some lawyers have become fabulously wealthy from it; it does, at best, an erratic job compensating those harmed by defective products; and some manufacturers have been subjected to ruinous damage judgments. In an important 2005 law-review article on the topic, three attorneys advocating civil-justice reform observed that the hundreds of billions of dollars spent on our tort system would be enough to solve our Social Security crisis and could pay for all the government programs involving

Education, training, and employment; general science; space and technology; conservation and land management; pollution control and abatement; disaster relief and insurance; community development; Federal law enforcement and administration of justice; and unemployment compensation.

This is not to suggest the wisdom of those programs—just that the money squandered by our tort system might be better spent elsewhere.

Legal-affairs editor Stephen B. Presser is the Raoul Berger Professor of Legal History at Northwestern University School of Law and a professor of business law at Northwestern's Kellogg School of Management.



Nicholas Carrie

A Look Ahead

by Kenneth Zaretzke

IN THE SUPREME COURT OF THE UNITED STATES

on writ of certiorari to the court of appeals

June 26, 2013

(Justice Kennedy delivered the opinion of the Court.)

The jurisprudence of liberty is a bright and shining star. Its twinkling arc across the sky of our constitutional polity signals the nation's fundamental commitment to the dignity of the individual. Liberty is the right of the individual to construct his own character and personality, as well as the meaning of the universe. So understood, liberty is not hide-bound. Bequeathed to us as a timeless memorial to the full flowering of liberty, the Constitution forbids discrimination against bisexuals in the form of statutes banning group marriage.

I

The present case involves the aspirations of three individuals, one man and two women. The man is a member of the monosexual majority—which is to say, a heterosexual—and the two women are bisexuals. The three of them wish to get married. The Court of Appeals ruled that they should be allowed to do so in light of our decision in *Elton John v. Texas*, in which we held that homosexual couples have a right to civil marriage. There, as the Court of Appeals noted, we said that

Liberty and its venerable twin, equality, burst asunder the restrictive carapaces of traditional thinking about marriage and sexuality. The 14th Amendment is simply incompatible with the tradition-based practice in which marriage is defined in exclusionary terms as the union of one man and one woman.

Because *Elton John* is the immediate precursor of today's decision, we briefly recount the facts in that case. Elton John, the pop singer, was married to his partner in Bemidji in a lavish ceremony that was televised live around the world. The state

of Minnesota, which does not require couples to establish residency before being issued marriage licenses, duly recognized the couple's marriage. After the Minnesota Supreme Court struck down traditional marriage, cities throughout the state of Minnesota performed many rites of connubial bliss for out-of-state homosexual couples. Elton John and his betrothed, Alfred "Tex" Richards of Houston, Texas, were among them. After a lengthy honeymoon, which included being fêted in Hollywood, the couple returned to Houston—where Tex but not Elton John lived—and petitioned for the recognition of their marriage license that was granted in the state of Minnesota.

Texas refused to recognize the marriage—a refusal that was subsequently immortalized in a hit song by Elton John—and the couple sued. In due course, the case arrived on the docket of this Court. After careful consideration, and amid the predictable protests, we ruled that the long-standing Texas statute restricting marriage to the union of one man and one woman placed an "undue discriminatory burden" on the sexual freedom of homosexuals, in violation of the 14th Amendment. Because group marriage is to bisexuals what same-sex marriage is to homosexuals, we affirm that the right of civil marriage recognized in *Elton John* applies to bisexuals and entitles them to civilly recognized group marriages. We now explain our reasoning more fully.

II

In a seminal work on the "deep meaning" of the Constitution, Laurence Tribe writes:

To say that "it's not the *anatomy*, it's the *relationship*"—in the words of a now legendary retort to Justice Scalia—is only to say what we have always known, even if we did not want to admit it: Sexual-orientational privileging is *per se* discriminatory. That is what "queering the Constitution" means and has always meant.

While we do not make a judgment today about any project of "queering" the Constitution, we fully agree with Professor Tribe—the most clairvoyant constitutional scholar of the age and a mentor to this Court—that traditionalist modes of sexual orientation and anatomical configuration may not be constitutionally

privileged.

In that light, the trajectory of this Court's doctrine of sexual freedom is clear and inescapable. In *Griswold v. Connecticut*, we made plain that married couples possess sexual freedom in the privacy of their bedrooms. Several years later, in *Eisenstadt v. Baird*, we extended that vital insight to unmarried couples. Then, in *Roe v. Wade*, we affirmed the right of women to remove impediments to sexual freedom, such as pregnancy. In *Planned Parenthood v. Casey*, we made clear that the importance of equal sexual freedom for men and women alike is enough to quell doubts about the morality of removing impediments to sexual freedom when they involve, as unfortunately they must, the practice of killing the unborn. And in *Lawrence v. Texas*, we all but named this right, which was only hinted at in our previous decisions. In *Lawrence*, we framed the right of sexual freedom in terms of equality as well as liberty, holding that homosexuals are not to be stigmatized on the basis of controversial moral beliefs. A few years later, in *Elton John v. Texas*, we held that the right of sexual freedom necessarily includes civil marriage for homosexual couples. Finally, today, we extend this selfsame right to bisexuals.

Justice Scalia described the "noxious nexus" between same-sex marriage and polyamorous group marriage in his *Elton John* dissent. "Once same-sex marriage is constitutionally recognized," our brother wrote, "it is just a matter of time before bisexuals demand that we endow them with the same rights that homosexuals have—which, in the case of bisexuals, means a right to group marriage." In *Elton John*, we did not address this claim. But while we neither confirmed nor denied it then, we confirm it now. Can it really be that Justice Scalia and his fellow dissenters want us to roll back the clock on constitutional rights, denying to homosexuals by parity of reasoning what the dissenters think should be denied to bisexuals?

Bisexuals, of course, are by definition doubly complementary. A bisexual marriage must consist of at least two bisexuals and one other gender-complementary person, who may be either monosexual or bisexual. Our decision today, however, has no direct relevance to the prospect of unlimited group marriage. Today's decision involves only limited group marriage, which we define for constitutional purposes as consisting of at least three but no more than four spouses, with no more than one of those spouses being a

monosexual.

Several amicus briefs, and our dissenting brethren as well, argue that there is no logical difference between limited and unlimited group marriage. Perhaps, perhaps not. In time, the truth will emerge as, with the aid of this Court, society throws off more and more shackles of tradition and restraint, discrimination and domination. In the meantime, we ask Justice Scalia to stop describing the ongoing advance in our constitutional understanding of sexual freedom as "the Harrod Experiment." The novelty of what we do today is in no way distinguishable from the novelty, in 1954, of *Brown v. Board of Education*.

It is not necessary to rebut, point by point, Justice Scalia's various facets of facetiousness, such as his claim that our main concern is to "be the mighty herald of 'immediate, ecstatic, and penetrating modes of living'" or to "immanentize the liberal eschaton." One or two points we cannot avoid mentioning, however. First, we decline to address the question of whether today's decision will give rise to an "army of counterfeit bisexuals looking for free kicks and governmental patronage," as Justice Scalia puts it.

Second, in his *Lawrence* dissent, Justice Scalia responded, "Do not believe it," to our declaration that *Lawrence* had nothing to do with same-sex marriage. Today, he says: "If I could collect royalties for being right, I would be a wealthy man." This is no time for jesting. Justice Scalia stands for the proposition that bisexuals are second-class citizens who should not be allowed to marry one another in a meaningful way. He would give aid and succor to the forces of reaction and unthoughtfulness. We cannot share his pose of levity, for we are conscious of our grave responsibility in protecting the liberty of all.

In the soon-to-be-famous conclusion of his dissent, Justice Scalia sums up our thinking today with the questionable honorific "idiotized." This time, we fear, Justice Scalia has ridden his hobby horse a furlong too far. We demand respect from Justice Scalia, not only for ourselves but for all whom we protect. Not for long will we continue to tolerate antique sarcasm and benighted attitudes within this Court.

Justice Scalia was not correct about the jurisprudence of liberty in *Casey*, *Lawrence*, and *Elton John*, and he is not correct about the jurisprudence of liberty today. He should not be listened to. Justice

Antonin Scalia should be and now is officially rebuked.

III

When the "dynamo" of sexual freedom collides with the "virgin" of traditional morality, it is clear which one must give way. The passive virgin of traditional morality cannot be the exemplar of the jurisprudence of liberty. Who would have guessed that the 14th Amendment contains intimations of intimacy that, upon being finally perceived by this Court, validate group marriage? And yet, that is the constitutional juncture at which we have now arrived. In affirming the decision of the Court of Appeals, today we make history as well as merely follow its inevitable path. In no way do we deny the dignity of marriage and its social importance. To the contrary, with today's decision, we reinforce rather than undermine that noble institution.

Should there be any doubt about the legitimacy of the decision we make today, we urge citizens to heed the careful reasoning of the plurality opinion in *Planned Parenthood v. Casey*, in which we clearly explained our paramount role and exemplary authority within the American polity. As widespread as may be the unthoughtful part of the nation, we are confident that most citizens will heed today's call to constitutional clarity and rally around their constitutional protectors. To them, we say: Ask not what your Supreme Court can do for you; ask what you can do for your Supreme Court.

If the right of marriage means anything, it is the right of the individual to be free from unwarranted governmental intrusion into matters so fundamentally affecting a person as the decision whether to practice monosexuality or bisexuality. In striking down the remnants of past understandings of marriage, we decide only that the Constitution does not permit society to turn hidebound conceptions of monogamy into a ritualistic fetish. Legislation that prevents bisexuals from being joined in group marriage, with or without the inclusion of one monosexual, is unconstitutional. Proceedings consistent with this decision must be undertaken by the appropriate authorities within 90 days.

It is so ordered.

Kenneth Zaretzke writes from Seattle.

Prohibition Addiction

Miami Vice isn't a film; it's a cultural indicator.

This thought came to me as I was making my way off a plane coming home from Las Vegas. (I was traveling for business, not pleasure, if you must know.) In flight, I had been scribbling some desultory notes on Michael Mann's \$125 million retread of his 1980's television series. As I inched my way to the plane's exit, I noticed a boy of ten or eleven in a T-shirt bearing the scowling portrait of Al Pacino as Tony Montana, the Cuban-Miami cocaine entrepreneur of Brian De Palma's lurid *Scarface* (1983). Groomed in character, Pacino was wearing his signature white suit and Caesar haircut, a .45 automatic hanging from the end of his right arm. What kind of parents, I wondered, would allow their son to wear such a shirt? No sooner had I asked this question than I had my answer. It was in my notes. The parents were obviously the kind who flock to films such as *Miami Vice* with junior in tow when they're not playing slots in Vegas.

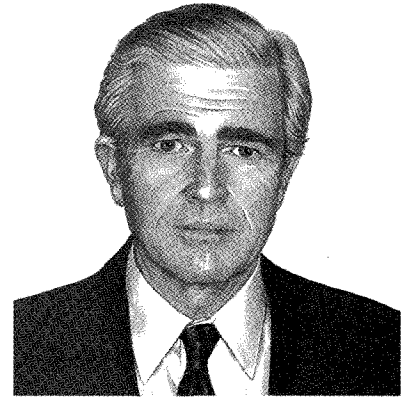
Miami Vice proves once more that, whatever harm contraband intoxicants have inflicted on America at large, they have always been a commercial boon to Hollywood. Americans are addicted to watching well-dressed criminals and cops buzzing about in fast cars, speedboats, and planes in their complementary efforts of supplying and interdicting the mood-altering substances some Americans crave and others condemn. The symbiosis between drug merchandising and drug bans has long been documented. The more we spend on drug policing, the greater the profit margin we inject into the trade. Since the beginning of the 20th century, we have been forcing the business into the hands of criminals who have taken advantage of their illegal and largely hidden market, inflating their profit margins astronomically. This, of course, has attracted even more ruthless thugs into the trade, with all the attendant social woes we witness daily. I have been reading about the drug wars all my life, and one truth seems clear: The more our authorities wage these campaigns, the bigger the illegal drug business becomes. This might be taken as a

sign, should anyone care to read it. The boys in Hollywood certainly have. They long ago decided that they would take their cut of our various prohibition-induced rackets.

It all began with the Volstead Act, which made booze illegal from 1919 to 1933. Without this inspired legislation, we might never have enjoyed the thespian delights of the snarling Edward G. Robinson, the sneering James Cagney, and the growling Humphrey Bogart.

Playing prohibition racketeers in the films of the 30's and 40's, these actors established themselves as irresistibly romantic antiheroes outwitting the hopelessly dull cops whose job it was to chase them. Sure, they got theirs in the end, but their gloriously wild rides to hell seemed to make it all worthwhile. In *Public Enemy* (1931), Cagney plays Irish bad boy Tom Powers with all the charm and etiquette of a prowling panther. He has a swell time dashing about in tailored suits, shooting up uncooperative speakeasies, and pitching woo to Jean Harlow in his careening roadster. He brooks no complaints against his behavior. When a tiresome moll refuses to serve him beer for breakfast, he responds by giving her face a grapefruit massage. The better part of America's citizenry packed the theaters to spend a couple of hours in the dark identifying with Cagney's vibrant heedlessness. True, he winds up wrapped in mummy bandages, tossed like a parcel onto his mom's doorstep—but, boy, the laughs he has before that final doorbell rings!

Hollywood was quick to learn that gangsters paid at the box office. Official society, however, began to complain that these swaggering fellows were setting a bad example. So Hollywood decided to beat the milling forces of censorship to the punch by setting up its own Production Code, the infamous Hays Office, which stipulated, among other things, that films would never depict criminals benefiting from their illegal stunts. This prompted Warner Brothers to run the following civic-minded announcement just after the opening credits of *Public Enemy*: "It is the ambition of the authors of 'The Public Enemy' to honestly [*sic*] depict an environment that exists today in a certain



Miami Vice

Produced and distributed
by Universal Pictures
Directed by Michael Mann
Screenplay by Michael Mann
and Anthony Yerkovich

strata of American life, rather than glorify the hoodlum or the criminal." Then, after Cagney bounces headlong onto his mom's threadbare hallway carpet, we are subjected to another announcement of virtuous intent: "The END of Tom Powers is the end of every hoodlum. 'The Public Enemy' is not a man, nor is it a character—it is a problem that sooner or later WE, the public, must solve."

Did the folks at Warner Studios believe they were struggling to solve the Tom Powers problem? Maybe the expat Brits on the payroll did. They were all for straightening out the unmannerly micks, yids, and dagos who inhabited that "certain strata" of their adopted country's life. But you can be sure the execs in the front office, most of them Jewish and Irish, weren't troubled by depictions of ethnic misbehavior, not when said depictions put so many fannies in those Bijou seats.

If censorship put the film studios on their mettle in the 30's and 40's, television provoked them to even more strenuous feats of hypocrisy starting in the 50's. How to give the American living-room audiences that jolt of electric criminality but not get themselves thrown off the air by some bluenose WASP at the FCC? To meet this challenge, Mann patented an especially felicitous formula. Make your heroes undercover narcotic detectives! This way, your good guys get to behave and—even better—look like high-living, drug-using criminals. Presto, the wonderfully named Sonny Crockett and

Ricardo Tubbs, played by Don Johnson and Philip Michael Thomas, stepped into their sockless Gucci loafers and our feckless American culture wearing linen sport coats over silk T-shirts. For the sake of the law, they indulged in all manner of wickedness—fast cars, diaphanously draped women, and rat-a-tat aggression—all supported by what seemed to be a limitless bankroll and a bottomless weapons cache. Cool! Watching the show, you could be a wild cocaine king for 42 guiltless minutes—with time out for Anacin commercials—knowing that, before the fade-out, your heroes would recover their virtue just in time to slap their bad-die buddies behind bars. All the thrills of the headlong life, with none of its legal risks. You got to snort your coke and impound it, too!

The film version of *Miami Vice* reworks this good-bad-boy formula, trying desperately to make it look new with Colin Farrell affecting a Don Johnson three-day stubble on his paddy mug and Jamie Foxx squinting himself cross-eyed trying to look tough. But nothing really works. Even the film's flashes of nudity seem stale. Beautiful babes invade Crockett's and Tubbs' showers—in separate scenes, thankfully—but it's a *déjà vu* ploy straight out of the weary James Bond films of the 1980's, more damp than steamy. I was relieved, however, to learn Mann used a body double for Tubbs' watery inamorata in deference to the modesty of the film's costar, British actress Naomie Harris. This makes every difference, of course. Chinese actress Gong Li seems not to have had such scruples. She appears striding womanfully into Farrell's shower intent on doing her bit to improve Sino-Hibernian relations.

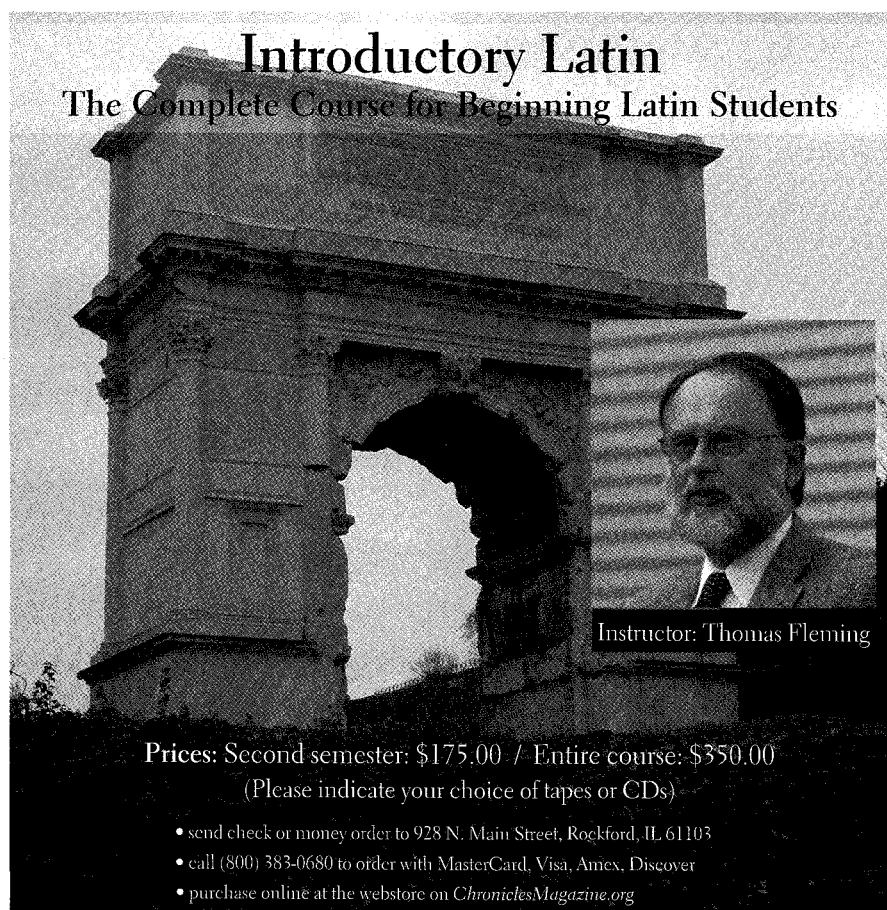
This film isn't an investigation into drugs; it is a manual for sybaritic living. All the characters—cops, criminals, and low-level snitches alike—live in chrome-and-marble-appointed abodes, drive BMWs and Lincoln Navigators, and have ample time to wrinkle their beds' silken sheets whenever the whim takes them. The only *déclassé* domicile to make the final cut houses a white-supremacist family that does wet work for a Colombian drug lord. Their trailer home and army-surplus wear instantly mark them as irredeemable.

The plot, such as it is, concerns a drug gang that has penetrated the FBI's database and begun murdering federal undercover operatives. Since one of these operatives was an informant that Crockett

and Tubbs had used in their own Miami-Dade investigations, our boys become cross with the feds and insist on taking over their investigation themselves, a demand to which the FBI improbably assents. In no time at all, Miami's finest have passed themselves off as drug transporters who exact 15 percent of the gross value of whatever they are moving. And, don't you know, despite the innumerable drug merchants working in Florida, they get an assignment from just the man they're pursuing—the aptly named Colombian drug lord Arcángel de Jesús Montoya. Piquant joke, no? Marx would have roared to see Jesus' angel literally deal dope to the masses. Gong Li is Jesús' business manager, and she's in his funeral SUV when Crockett has a backseat sit-down with the poppy honcho. No sooner have Dublin and Shanghai met than they're making eyes at each other. This, as everyone knows, is rule three in the undercover operative's manual. When they meet a second time in Haiti, Crockett asks her out for a mojito. She knows just the place—a mere 700 miles away in Havana by speedboat. It's Cagney and Harlow all over again. A toss in the sheets, and Crockett's thinking that maybe he'd like to throw away his stinking badge and

settle down with this dragon lady. Or so it seems. The plot is so obscure and the dialogue so mumbled that his intentions are never developed clearly. It might be a plot strand Mann started and then abandoned when he spliced his scenes together, thinking it too unsettling for Americans wearing Al Pacino T-shirts. Too bad. An undercover narc being seduced by the wealth and luxury available to those he is pursuing would have injected a welcome dose of realism into this otherwise preposterous twaddle.

But I exaggerate. Realism does make a belated if inadvertent entrance into the proceedings. In their role as drug smugglers, Crockett and Tubbs are commissioned to import tons of cocaine into Florida from Haiti. This is supposed to be exceedingly difficult and dangerous—thus warranting their shoulder-strapped Uzis and their three-million-dollar fee. Yet they deliver the shipment's powder-filled plastic bags by plane and boat with less incident from law-enforcement and customs agencies than if they were transporting a wholesale allotment of Dr. Lyon's Tooth Powder to a pharmaceutical distributor. This I believed. It explains what we know of drugs in America today.



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Government for the People

"I owe you an apology, *compadrito*," Héctor Villa was telling his friend, Jesús "Eddie" Juárez.

Jesús "Eddie," who hadn't the foggiest idea what his friend was talking about, nodded his head and attempted a forgiving smile anyway, on the off chance it might prompt Héctor to clinch his apology by offering to buy another round.

"I never understood all you had to go through, losing that school-board election and all, until I had to walk a mile in your shoes last fall," Héctor explained.

The two were seated at their favorite table by the window at the Taberna Aztlán, watching Saturday-afternoon football on the widescreen TV while automobile horns blared and brake drums screeched outside on Highway 47. Since the Villas' return from Las Vegas some weeks before, Héctor had taken to spending more time away from home on evenings and weekends than had previously been his custom. He'd found it easier by far to make satisfactory explanation to the house police at the MGM Grand Hotel than to AveMaría, and his nights the first week home had been spent on the Castro Convertible in the den.

Jesús "Eddie," recalling his own humiliation at the polls, scowled and chucked a handful of popcorn toward the players. "The f--king Anglos," he agreed. "I tell you, *hermano*: There ain't been an honest election in the Rio Abajo since the Mexican War!"

Héctor sighed. His friend's cynicism about the United States upset and depressed him. The fact that he and Jesús "Eddie" had been unlucky in electoral politics hardly proved the overall corruption of the American system. George W. Bush, like George Washington before him, had got himself elected President without ever telling a lie. In the two months since his own loss to Tomasina Luna, Héctor had suffered acutely from intimations of political inadequacy, the knowledge that he'd let his country and his President down in their time of need. Not even recent domestic strife and misunderstanding had been able to eclipse his suffering. God only knew what damage the Luna woman would do when she got to Washington in January. And

how happy Hillary Clinton would be to see her there!

"Tomasina isn't an Anglo," he objected mildly.

Jesús "Eddie's" fist struck the table hard enough to make the popcorn jump in the bowl.

"She *works* for the Anglos, *hombre!*" he shouted. "She supported my *op-po*-nent for the school *board*—the fat bitch!"

Héctor decided to give it up. "Anyway—I'm sorry, *amigo*. I'm taking the tab tonight, okay?"

A few evenings later, he got home to discover AveMaría and Contracepción tearful and nearly incoherent with rage and indignation. Fortunately (Héctor reflected), female hysteria was among the many things that went better with beer. He took a bottle from the refrigerator and went on to the living room, where the women sat waiting to describe the outrage for him in hideous detail.

The thing *was* outrageous, he had to agree after he'd heard his wife and daughter out. It had begun when Contracepción submitted a passionate defense of the Iraq war in fulfillment of a one-page writing assignment in English class the week before. The teacher, a Mrs. Ahmadinejihad, having marked up the page with red-penciled underlinings and *sp's* beside the offending words, inscribed an emphatic scarlet "D" above the top line beside her name. Since Mrs. Ahmadinejihad, an Iranian lady who'd lived in the United States less than two years, was no great shakes in the spelling department herself, Contracepción had looked up the words in her pocket Webster's dictionary and discovered that she had spelled all but one of them correctly. Mrs. Ahmadinejihad was guilty of decorrecting her essay! Confident of success, Contracepción had approached the teacher the following day, presented her evidence, and politely requested a mark upgrade to A- or B+. To her horror and astonishment, Mrs. Ahmadinejihad, rather than admit her error, had explained that the low grade reflected not the essay's relatively unimportant spelling errors but its basically irrational and self-contradictory argument. Stung to retort, Contracepción had countered unthinkingly by



calling Mrs. Ahmadinejihad unfair and un-American—for which she'd been sent to the principal's office and suspended from school for an entire week. By the time she'd finished recounting the story to her father, Contracepción had reconciled herself somewhat to the prospect of missing a week's worth of classes. Her resentment at the injustice done her, however, burned stronger than ever.

"*Panchito*, what to do?" AveMaría wailed. "It is not just what this *bruja* has done to poor Contracep—we have communist foreigners teaching at our schools, right here in Belen!"

Héctor did not answer right away but sat very still and rigid on the overstuffed sofa, too appalled even to finish his beer. "I must call the FBI in Albuquerque," he said finally, "and let them know about this thing that has happened, the evil situation that exists."

"Oh, and *Papá*, I almost forgot!" Contracepción cried. "Mrs. Ahmadinejihad is, like, good friends with Mrs. Luna! I see them together all the time around school, talking with their heads together so you can't hear a word they're saying! Do you think they could really be terrorists or something, *Papaño*?"

Once the connection had been made for him, Héctor had to wonder why he hadn't seen it from the beginning. Tomasina had run for the House on an anti-war platform. The Ahmadinejihad woman was an Islamist from Iran, a country President Bush had identified as part of the Axis of Evil. At once, the whole business came together for him. He must, of course, inform the FBI as soon as possible. Not, however, before he'd faced the English teacher down and seen the Enemy for himself.

"Take care that you do not discuss this matter with anyone," Héctor told his daughter sternly. "I will call tomorrow for

an appointment with Mrs. Ahmadineji-had at the school and hear what she has to say for herself. After that—well, we shall see what we shall see! I am not the *hom-bre* to beat around the bush in situations such as this one, I promise you.”

Mrs. Ahmadineji-had was, apparently, a very busy woman. Contracepción’s suspension was nearly up by the time Héctor succeeded in getting an appointment with her. He quit work early that afternoon, drove home, and left his van parked in the street in front of the house. Already by 3:15 nowadays, the Belen rush hour was terrible, and he preferred AveMaría’s Subaru when maneuvering in heavy traffic. On the drive between home and the school, Héctor strove to get his temper under control, partly by paying scrupulous attention to the posted speed limits. He was quite aware of his tendency to speed when driving under the influence of justifiable anger.

Héctor was approaching the downtown district on the Jarales Road when he caught sight of bar lights flashing red, blue, and yellow in the Subaru’s rearview mirror. He glanced down at the speedometer: 28 in a 30 mph zone. What in hell were they pulling him over for? He couldn’t believe his bad luck. His appointment with Mrs. Ahmadineji-had was just fifteen minutes from now, and the school was still a good five minutes away. The police cruiser pulled in behind him on the shoulder. Héctor was about to get out of the car and walk back to it when he recalled that he’d done this the last time and come close, apparently, to getting himself shot when a robotic voice roared “GET BACK IN THAT CAR!” through the bullhorn mounted on the cruiser. So he sat tight on the seat, watching the side mirror as the cop—a fat man with womanish hips and a shaved bullet head—stumped forward carrying a ticket book in his hand. Héctor looked up at him through the open window with what he hoped was the patient, slightly hurt expression of a solid citizen unfairly wronged.

“So what did I do?” he asked the officer. “I wasn’t speeding, was I?”

The look he received in return might have been directed at a child molester caught with three children bound hand and foot in the trunk.

“Operating an unregistered vehicle,” the cop informed him. “I called in to Dispatch. Registration expired over three months ago.”

Héctor felt dismay, humiliation, and

anger all together. How like a woman to forget to reregister her car! He usually thought to remind AveMaría to have the oil changed every 3,000 miles, but a man couldn’t think of *everything*. “Is it?” Héctor asked. “It’s my wife’s car,” he explained lamely.

The cop acted as though he hadn’t heard him. “License, please,” he demanded.

He waddled back to the police cruiser with the license, while Héctor consulted his watch. He had twelve minutes to make it to the school, and he’d never known even a routine stop to take less than ten minutes. How could AveMaría have been so careless? Now *his* name would go on the ticket, and he’d have a second citation in less than two years on his municipal-court record—in addition, of course, to the ongoing trouble with Homeland Security. Now, he’d never be allowed to run for office again, even if he wanted to. Without really thinking about what he was doing, Héctor reached across the seat, punched the glove-box button, and withdrew the registration and insurance packet. Of course, Dispatch knew what it was doing—you can’t argue with electronics—but it did no harm to check anyway, while he waited. Here were the operator’s manual, proof of insurance, and what must be last year’s registration slip. He pulled this free of the little bundle and looked it over. “EXP 09/23/06” he read in an upper right-hand box. So there *had* been a mistake, after all! It seemed too good to be true. And, truth be told, Héctor was inclined to give Police Dispatch benefit of doubt ahead of his wife.

All the same, when the officer returned with the written-out summons for a court appearance and a fine amounting to fifty dollars in his hand, he thrust the other document at him through the window.

“What’s this?” he asked politely.

The cop held the slip at the end of his nose, and then nearly at arm’s length.

“See?” he demanded, pointing with a fat finger to another set of numbers in a different box. “Expired. What I said. Dispatch is always reliable. You can’t argue with electronics.”

So Héctor signed the ticket. Well, it had been worth a try, anyway. And there went fifty dollars AveMaría was *not* going to spend on the new pair of sandals she wanted from Neiman Marcus.

He arrived at the school nearly ten minutes late, and three minutes later knocked on the closed door of Mrs. Ahmadineji-had’s classroom.

“In America is always late, late,” the teacher said, frowning, as he entered. “Is not like in Iran, where the watch hand of the late one is cut off—*whack, whack!* *Allahu Akhbar!*” Héctor couldn’t tell whether she intended this to be a joke, or not.

Within her *burqa* and robes, Mrs. Ahmadineji-had appeared to be a slight, wiry woman with a brown hatchet face. A small oriental carpet Héctor supposed was a prayer rug lay on the linoleum floor beside her desk, and the bulletin board above it was papered with color photographs of golden-domed mosques rising against forbidding desert backgrounds like brown moonscapes. Without asking permission, Héctor seated himself on the chair set close against the desk to face the teacher—the hot seat, obviously, for generations of unruly children.

“I am here,” he explained, “to discuss my daughter, Contracepción, with you.”

“Ah yes. Contra—in Iran, we do not use such words as that one. It is a shame and a crime even to speak of it. But *here*—”

Héctor felt determined to put this bigoted woman in her place. “In America we are Protestants, not Islamists,” he said firmly. “Americans are not afraid to speak plainly. That is why I must tell you, Mrs. Allah-*uh*-ji-had, that you have treated my daughter very unfairly. First, you marked her down for spelling mistakes that weren’t mistakes at all. Then, you said the low grade wasn’t for spelling in the first place, but because her paper was not good sense. Is that correct?”

“Yes, yes, of course, very—*more* than correct!”

“What would you say if I told you everything Contracep wrote in that paper was *exactly* what Vice President Cheney said in his TV address two weeks ago?”

“Cheney? But he is a war criminal! An enemy of Holy Islam! He makes no sense at all!”

Héctor knew he was dealing with a madwoman.

“So you won’t change my daughter’s grade to A-? Or even B+?”

“Me? No! I am not heretic, I am not *kaffir*! Islam is Truth! Islam does not compromise! Islam conquers by the sword!”

Héctor arose with dignity, holding his cap in hand.

“Then I’m afraid, ma’am,” he said, “my next stop must be the principal’s office. Can you tell me how to find it, please?”



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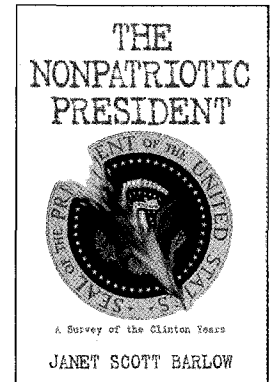
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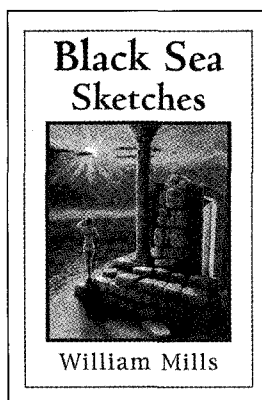
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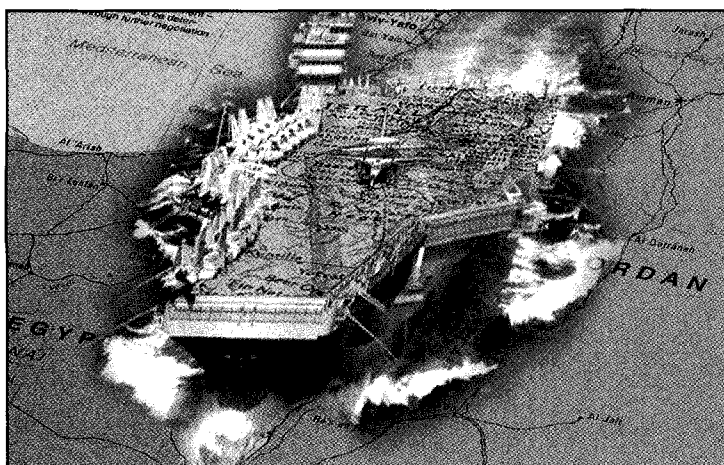
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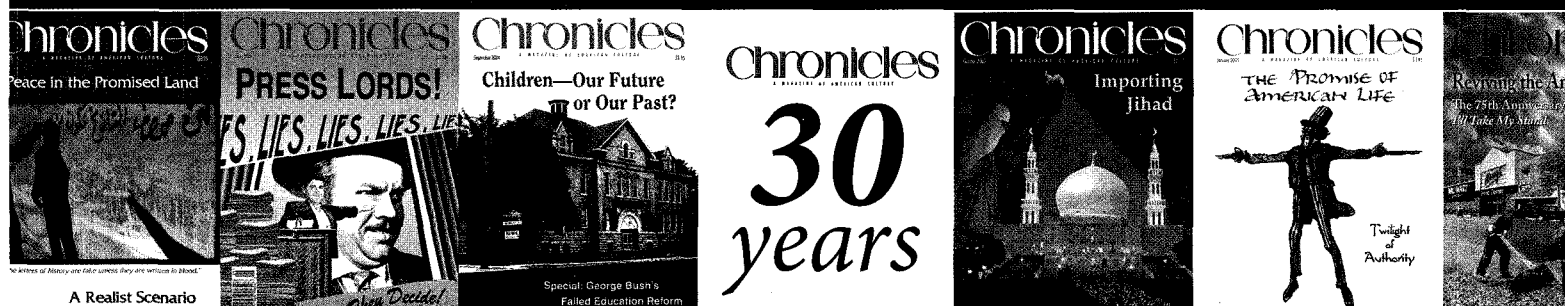
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